

Review of CCA Studies in SW China

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A Monk is feeding the White-eared Pheasant (*Crossoptilon crossoptilon*, National Appendix II Protected, IUCN Near Threatened), at the Zhuojie Monastery, Sichuan PR China



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Executive Summary



Case 11 Tibetan lady and Xhia'e'ba sacred mountain in Cuochi Village. By Lu Bin, 2007.

This study on community conserved areas in the SW China Biodiversity Hotspot is timely. China has been continuously experiencing ambitious economic development for the last twenty years, while the environment and natural resources have seen evident trends of rapid deterioration. The risks of worsening status of biodiversity and ecological safety, food security, are haunting the county as never before. Consequently, the government determination to reverse the trends, manifested by the establishment of nature reserves, has witnessed a sharp rise in the last decade, particularly in the Western region of China - over 75% of the national total size of the protected area is in the western region which is nearly 70% of national total land mass and home to majority of ethnic groups in China.

The rapid growth of protected area is achieved by replicating the experiences of the PAs management system in the Eastern or coastal region to the Western region. Since the turn the this century, two other major policies, one on establishing small protected areas seemingly similar to that of CCAs and the other on the collective forest property reform, have also been replicating experiences from Eastern and coastal region to the Western provinces.

But good intentions do not always lead to desirable results. This study cautions that the PAs management models different from that of the conventional ones developed in the Eastern and coastal regions have to be carefully devised for the Western region of China. The PAs management systems in the Western China, are neither prepared in terms of capacity nor management resources, either in terms of enforcement of resources laws, to enter into the processes and

institutional arrangements for negotiated consensus building, sharing of responsibilities and benefits with other stakeholders.

Further, the Western provinces are also different from the coastal and Eastern regions in that different natural conditions, diversified ethnic cultures and livelihoods which are very much based on collective resource property and communities' slower adaptation to the mainstream economy. Despite the good intension, the governmental mandate promoting small protected areas predominantly in the coastal provinces in the interests of small ecosystem protection is yet to accommodate the interests of community livelihood, collective resources management practices, and cultural values. Otherwise, its potential to be supportive of CCAs will not be fulfillable.

By far, SW China represents the mountainous region of high forest reserve, and home to highest number of ethnic group whose livelihoods are indispensable from management of collective forests. It is safe to predict that SW China has the most conducive natural and cultural conditions for the Community conserved areas. The study of CCAs represents a new trend of thinking that could not only provide an alternative model complimenting conventional approaches, but also potentially enrich the scope and contents of co-management in the vast nature reserves currently dominated by fence and fine management approach in the western provinces.

This preliminary studies examined the existing literatures on sacred land practices in China, particularly SW China. Over 70 formally published journal articles, book sections, and some unpublished policy memos, and NGOs reports, mostly ethno-botanic, anthropological, recorded practices of more than ten ethnic groups with credible agreements that the desirable status of certain ecosystem or the sustainable use of certain species or ecological processes and services are the result of conscious cultural or religious practices and collective livelihood necessity. In one way or another these studies attempted to deal with question one and three of this research, namely, 1) can a strong relationship be identified between a given ecosystem, area or species and a specific indigenous or local community concerned about it because of cultural, livelihood-related or other strongly felt reasons? And to the less degree to 3) have the voluntary management decisions and efforts of the concerned community led to the conservation of habitats, species, and ecological functions and associated cultural values (regardless of the objectives of management as perceived by the community)?

But the existing literature contains no studies that have done a justifiable job to answer question two of this research, namely, 2) has the community—*de jure* or *de facto*— the power to take and enforce the key management decisions? It remained to be answered by new study on CCAs how indigenous or local communities reach consensus and remain effective in decision-making and collection action to maintain cultural and ecological linkages. It is even more important to understand if and how collective action and decision-making in the communities have dealt with social, economic, political, and ecological changes in CCAs management before hastily conclude that CCAs are hopeless in dealing with external changes and are doomed to be eroded. Studies on CCAs in China has done fair amount of conceptual discussions and now are in great need to go beyond that conceptual level and further work need to “zoom in” to understand the details about governance, institutions and self organization within the communities that have answered question one and to some degree question three with positive evidence in Western provinces. With enough evidence for question two, it is difficult to promote CCAs at the policy and management level in China’s system of protected areas management.

Based on the literature review, we selected 13 individual cases located in Sichuan, Qinghai, Southeastern TAR, and Yunnan – four provinces. Our study supports that all of the 13 cases are CCAs. Six of them are outside of any forms of official conservation status, such as NRs, National Scenic Park, sites for the World Heritage, the Ramsar or the M&B. The other seven are found inside of PAs, and four out of this seven cases have reached some form of agreements with local government management agencies.

There are eight cases with unclear institutions and seven cases showing local collective initiatives or new institutions with the help of outsiders. But overall, we concur that either the cases with the tangible institutions or only showing intangible cultural practices of sacred land, should be viewed as CCAs. But further studies on CCAs in SW China needs to explore the indicators and tools to work on the both scenario.

CCAs, are found in a nested hierarchical structure. It is important to recognize the significance of sacred land at the household level and throughout to the regionally significant ones. Particularly the ones at the household level are most vulnerable. Without such foundation of day-to-day attachment and practices, the lofty ones at the top might start to loose its cultural constituency. More researches on this issue in connection with recent collective

forest property reform policy and mass tourism development policies should be carried out urgently.

China's civil society is still at its early self-discovery mode. In the Western regions, the awareness of civil action is at its infancy, the ability to take the advantage of statutory legal system and a series of rural policies favourable to villagers is very minimal in comparison to the coastal and eastern regions. NGOs involvement in helping the Chinese society to understand and promote CCAs is still extremely limited. NGOs or INGOs will have to gain more in-depth understanding through their own pilot work, so that to appreciate the complexity of reaching community-initiated, and community-endorsed CCAs arrangements with negotiated management mandates of the government and the communities.

All 13 cases, are applicable for the constitutional law - the Regional Autonomy Law for the Ethnic Groups. This law entitles greater flexibility to the autonomous county and prefecture government to legislate locally in the best interests of the core local ethnic groups. But there is little evidence that these local government have yet shown local legislative innovations on promoting elements of CCAs. This however, does hold extra potential in theory and in practice, to recognize, experiment, and replicate CCAs.

Despite the fact that the community conserved areas enjoy no formal legal recognition and administrative support, there have been signs both on the governmental and non-governmental fronts that the trend can change for the better. The new legislation on China's Protected Areas, and a series laws and policy supporting rural democratic self-government, or experimental work initiated by villagers voluntary groups or local monastery, seem to point to a direction that community conserved areas can become a new valuable addition complementary to the conventional protected areas system.

In view of the IUCN protected area governance types, CCAs (Type D) might be a good strategy to start getting communities better organized, and prepared for negotiating desirable outcome of the Type B (Co-Managed Protected Areas-shared governance) arrangements in the near future, or have CCAs recognized but well nested in Type A (Government Managed Protected Areas-state governance).

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Abbreviations

CCAs	Community Conserved Areas
CEESP	
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CI	Conservation International
CMPA	Co-managed Protected Areas
GWDS	Greater Western Development Strategy
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organizations
IUCN	World Conservation Union
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
PAs	Protect Areas
PPA	Private protected areas
SFA	State Forestry Agency
SW China	Southwest China
TAR	Tibetan Autonomous Region
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
WCS	World Conservation Society
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The PAs System in Evolving Chinese Context

The total protected area in China as of 2006, according to the data from the State Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), has reached about 1.5 million km², or 15%-18% of the land area, and by 2010 the goal is to reach a total of 1,800 protected areas, or at least 16% of the total land area. (SFA,



2005b) (Yan et al., 2004) But most significantly, over 75% (Shen, 2007) of the total size of the protected area is in the western region of China (see map on next page-China's Protected Areas). The western region of China as defined by the most prominent policy - the Greater Western Development Strategy (GWDS), issued in 2000, is the region covering the following 12 western provinces Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan, Shaanxi, Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Tibetan Autonomous Region, Xinjiang

and the municipality of Chongqing (see map to the right - the areas in colours). This region is regarded as the zones of low economic development and at the same time is facing greater ecological uncertainties and challenges that have manifested increasingly significant adverse environmental impact in form of soil erosion, reduction of water in terms of quality and quantity, sandstorms, serious floods on the Eastern region or the mid to lower reaches of the major river watersheds.

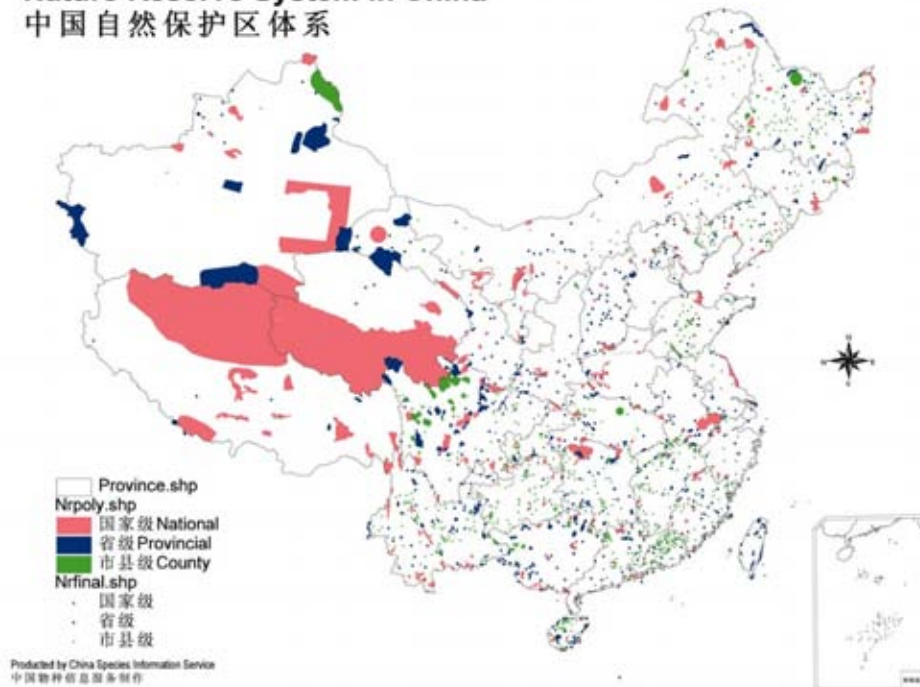
The GWDS region covers an area of 6,850,000km², 71.4% of the whole country, but with as little as GDP 17.1% of the total national economy. The 12 provinces or regions are home to 0.364billion people, 28.6% of the national total. And 89% of total ethnic population consisting of more than 40 groups live in western China.² Studies (Xu and Wilkes, 2003; Xu and Melick, 2007) have pointed out that a high percentage of these ethnic groups, for instance the Tibetan, the Yi, the Bai, the Miao, the Dai and many other groups, have a long traditions and cultural practices encoded in their day to day livelihood activities, of attaching sacredness to mountains, hill, water bodies, geographic formation, fauna and flora species, consequently have delivered conservation outcomes, sustainable uses, or maintaining dynamic disequilibrium of ecosystems. Therefore "it is imperative to learn and understand the local cultural traditions and not to simply make

² The population density of the western region is merely 51.3/km², nearly one ninth that of the Eastern region. <http://www.chinawest.gov.cn/web/index.asp>

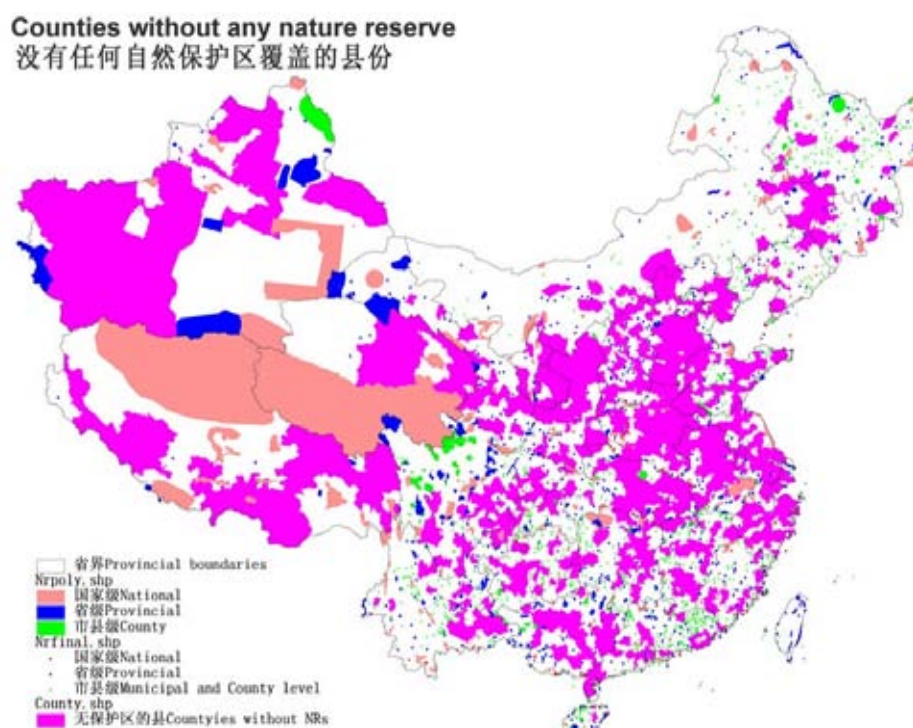
management decisions based on reserve management in western parts of China.”(Shen, 2007)

The PAs management model developed since 1950s, in the Eastern and coastal regions of China where local communities, largely mainstream Chinese agrarian societies have benefited from economic reform in the 1980s and 1990s. Local communities are better prepared to adapt into the alternative livelihood in or adjacent to the protected areas. However, in the western region, some (Shen, 2007) has cautioned, already inadequately financed by the central government, the PAs model adapted from the eastern areas, not only runs the risk of being the insufficient guarantee for the effective management of nearly 75% (see below left map) of the total protected areas, mostly established in the western region since late 1990s, but also with little capacity to safeguard ecological security, social and cultural cohesion and economic prosperity of the local population.

Nature Reserve System in China
中国自然保护区体系



Source: China's Protected Area (2004)



Source: China's Protected Area (2004)

There are two streams of argument supporting differentiated approaches of PAs management between the Eastern and Western regions of China. One is that the government in the western provinces are poorly prepared to face new issues of market economy copying from the eastern region. The other is that the strong linkage between collectively managed common-pool resources and multi-faceted community livelihood is poorly appreciated by investment policies and resource management policies. **Therefore, the PAs management models different from that of the conventional ones developed in the Eastern and coastal regions have to be carefully devised for the Western region of China.**

1.2 SW China and CCAs

The collective forest nation-wide amounts to 1.66 million km², or 57.55% of the total forest area, and 37% is in the mountainous region. Also the mountainous region – 69% of land surface in China, hosts 90% of all forest land, 84% of forest reserve, 77% of rangeland, 76% of lakes and wetland, 98% of water resources, 56% of the populations and over 1500 counties and municipality of the total of 2,100 nationwide (SFA, 2005a). **By far, SW China represents the mountainous region of high forest reserve, and home to highest number of ethnic groups whose livelihoods are indispensable from management of collective forests. It is safe to**

predict that SW China has the most conducive natural and cultural conditions for the CCAs.

The Hengduan Mountain Region of the Southwest China, is identified by Conservation International as one of the Global Biodiversity Hotspot. (Myers et al., 2000) The Mountains of the Southwest China hotspot covers South of Qinghai, Southeast Tibet through western Sichuan and extends into central and northern Yunnan (see map in part 2 – 13 CCAs study sites). It is the richest botanically in the world's temperate regions. With only 10 percent of China's geographical area, the hotspot is home to about 50 percent of country's birds and mammals and more than 30 percent of its higher plants. More than 12,000 species of higher plants, of which 29 percent are unique to this hotspot, have been identified. The wildlife in the Mountains of Southwest China hotspot is equally diverse, with more than 300 mammal and 686 bird species documented. The hotspot is the habitat to the giant panda, red panda, golden monkey and black necked crane, etc. (CEPF, 2002) 17 out of the total of 56 China's ethnic groups are indigenous to this region, including the Tibetan, the Yi, the Bai, the Naxi, etc. Each ethnic group has created rich indigenous knowledge for livelihood and nature resource management.

Meanwhile, Southwest China is threatened by excessive exploitation of its nature resource and ineffective management of nature resource. Southwest China is rich in hydropower, minerals and scenic value. With the rapid development of China's economy, Southwest China is being converted into the base for hydropower, mining industry and mass tourism destinations. This has rendered heavy pressure on the biodiversity conservation and great backlash on environmental justices which the local communities potentially suffer the most and the longest of the negative environmental consequence.

To preserve the biodiversity in this region and promote the community development and participation, China's government and in cooperation with international donor agencies have invested in this region. International NGOs such as WWF, CI, TNC and WCS also are active in this region. But there are still great gaps between conventional approaches of protected areas management and innovative approaches to place the culture diversity as one of the core values in biodiversity conservation. CCAs studies in SW China along with similar efforts in the region are hopeful to bridge the gap.

PART TWO: METHODS AND RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

2.1 *Defining Research Issues*

The research questions are inherited from the original design of the CEESP CCAs study. It consists of three primary questions;

- I. Can a strong relationship be identified between a given ecosystem, area or species and a specific indigenous or local community concerned about it because of cultural, livelihood-related or other strongly felt reasons?
- II. Is the concerned indigenous or local community a major player in decision making about the management of the ecosystem, area or species? In other words, has the community—*de jure* or *de facto*—the power to take and enforce the key management decisions?
- III. Have the voluntary management decisions and efforts of the concerned community led to the conservation of habitats, species, and ecological functions and associated cultural values (regardless of the objectives of management as perceived by the community)?

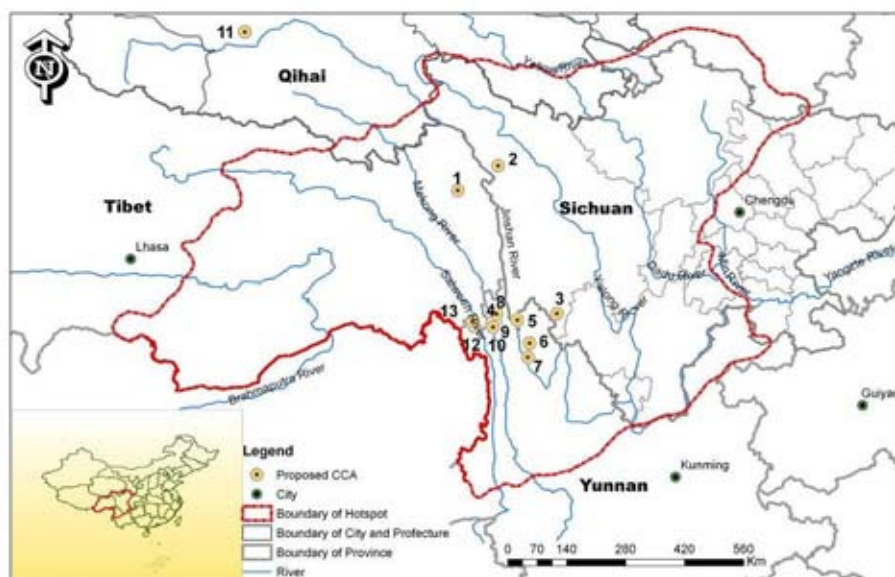
2.2 *Research Processes*

Through the consultation with the following organizations, a list of potential CCAs sites was developed. A further selection was done based on the distance, feasibility of information collection, representation of geographic as well subject matters on CCAs, availability of collaborators. Finally 13 cases were decided in May, see map below (sites coded 1-13). Each collaborator went with the data base excel table and two pages of questions before they each started on their own to collect information and answer these questions. During this period from May to July, on-going communications and consultation take place as needed on the phone or through emails.

Consultations with the following organizations:

- Department of Conservation Biology, Peking University;
- Institute of Environmental Laws, Zhongnan University of Finance and Laws;
- Conservation International China Program;
- The Snowland Great Rivers, a local environmental organization in Qinghai;
- Baimaxueshan National Protected Area;
- Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences
- Kawagebo Cultural Association;

Each community being selected in this study was consulted their prior consent and with their oral permission to publish the research results. All communities appreciate and are hopeful that new policies and laws in the near future as the result of this and other similar CCAs work can provide them with stronger support to conserve their sacred landscape as the same time improve their livelihoods.



Map – 13 Selected CCAs Sites in SW China Biodiversity Hotspot

It took longer than we have expected to complete CCA database of 13 cases (see Annex). Within a compressed timeframe, this study can not dig deep into the social and cultural complexity of the CCAs practices, especially it is difficult to make sense of the cases that don't seem to have active and tangible collective structure making management decisions, yet sacred land practices are evident at these sites, further in-depth field studies are crucial.

2.3 Research collaborators and participants

- a) Shen Xiaoli, Peking University – Zongsa Monastery and Dongba Village two CCAs sites;
- b) Musuo, Kawagebo Cultural Association – Nadozhage, and Siyonggong two CCAs sites;
- c) Li, Bo, previous CBIK, Centre for Society and Environment, Nagela, Zongzai, and Yongzhuding – three CCAs sites,
- d) Yang Fangyi, CEPF Yunnan, Humugu-Napa, Jiabi, two CCAs sites;
- e) Sunshan, Conservational International, Cuoci, one CCA site;
- f) Zhang Zhongyun, Ethnic Studies Institute, Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences, Yubeng, and Nienqin Kawagebo, two CCAs sites;
- g) Chili Zuoma, Baima Mountain Culture Institute, Yading CCA site;
- h) Lu Zhi, Professor of Conservation Biology at Peking University, are giving overall guidance.

PART THREE LITERATURE REVIEW AND FIELD STUDIES

3.1 Assessment of Literature Review on Sacred Land Practices in China

This study collected over 70 formally published journal articles, book sections, and some unpublished policy memos, and NGOs reports. Two third are in Chinese language. More than 30 of them were cited in this report. Majority of the literatures have conceptually focused on discussion of the relationship between community's religious beliefs, cultural practices and the environmental protection in the sacred sites. Those that focuses on ethno-botanic studies have found that the unique ethnic cultures have contributed to the protection or sustainable use of some specific plant species. (Salick et al., 2004; Anderson et al., 2005) A handful of studies have quantitatively focused on identifying and comparing the occurrence and distribution of fauna and flora between sacred sites and non-sacred sites.(Zhou et al., 2004)

Overall, most of the anthropological and ethno-botanic studies in SW China presented categorical evidence that it is because of cultural, livelihood-related reasons that some ecosystems, or fauna and flora species are maintained by specific indigenous or local communities. These studies can qualify for a positive answer to the question one. And there is some sporadic quantitative, or robust ecological studies to prove communities' cultural practices and livelihood-oriented practices directly contribute to conservation of habitats, species, ecological functions and associated cultural values on the sacred land. This can partially qualify for a positive answer to question three.

But there is almost no studies from the existing literature on sacred land that has focused on close examination of the community property arrangements and management decision-making within the communities. The studies can not confirm that communities' decision-making with codified cultural practices as purposeful management have safeguarded the sacred places for generations. In other words, **almost no studies have done a justifiable job to answer question two - how indigenous or local communities reach consensus and remain effective in decision-making and collection action to maintain cultural and ecological linkages. It is even more important to understand if and how collective action and decision-making in the communities have dealt with social, economic, political, and ecological changes in CCAs management before hastily conclude that CCAs are hopeless in dealing with external changes and are doomed to be eroded.**

3.2. CCAs Distribution in Existing Literatures

The sacred land practices serve as a good landmark for identification of CCAs site. The Dai people in Xishuangbanna of the southern Yunnan used a wide range of wetland plants, including 46 families and 102 species. The study suggests that transmission and inheritance of ethnical culture plays a very important role for the conservation of plant diversity (Fang et al., 2006; Yang and Zhao, 2004). The traditional practice of the Holy Hill concept among the Dai people, has made a significant contribution to the conservation of biological diversity in the region. (Pei and Luo, 2000)

The Yi ethnic group has the largest population among the ethnic groups and the most elaborated sub-groups system in Yunnan and it is also wide-spread in western Sichuan Province. The Yi communities in Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture of Central Yunnan worship at least 21 species of plants for different cultural beliefs (Liu et al., 2000; Jie, 2001; Wu et al., 2001). The Tibetan living in northwest of Yunnan, Sichuan, South-eastern Tibet TAR and Qinghai is the group most often cited and studied, and have demonstrated most sophisticated sacred land system with great spatial and temporal variations and very diverse management systems interweaved into day-to-day livelihoods and natural resources management. (Guo, 2003; Gama, 2004; Ma, 2004; Wu et al., 2001; Zhou et al., 2002; Wang, 2004; Zhou et al., 2004; Buntaine et al., 2006; Guo, 2004)

There are also a number of other ethnic groups living in SW China the the Dulong (Yang and Zhao, 2004), the Lishu (Cun, 2002; Yang and Zhao, 2004), the Jinpo (Jin, 2001), the Naxi (Luo, 2001), the Lahu (Su, 2001), the Miao (Zhang et al., 2001), the Hani (Yang and Zhao, 2004), the Deang (Yang and Zhao, 2004). They have their practices of holding plants, mountains, rivers, rocks, wildlife, etc. as sacred for different cultural, religious and livelihood purposes.

Increasingly, researches on conservation or sustainable natural resources management, have shown that sacred land practices are under rising pressures as the result of rapid regional economic development. It is calling for new conservation policy for China that includes the indigenous knowledge and values that have maintained nature and cultures for generations (Yang and Zhao, 2004; Jie, 2001; Xu and Melick, 2007; Xu et al., 2006)

The following table is a collection of sites and ethnic groups in the literature that have sufficient information as potential CCAs studies.

Site	Estimated size of CCA sites	Ethnic groups	Management mechanism	Threats	Citation
The Wandan Village, Wandan Adm. Village, Wucalu township, Luxi Municipality, Dehong Prefecture, Yunnan	266.7 km ²	The Jinpo	Collective forest managed by the village Shaman	Cultural erosion as the result of outside influence and commercial logging of forest as cash income	(Jin, 2001)
Niubodie, Peilongkan, Peijiao Village, Niujie Township, Sipin County, Yunnan	200 km ²	The Yi	Collective forest primarily managed by traditional rules;	Cultural erosion as the result of outside influences, population increase, growing demand for fuel wood and construction timber also other commercial demands for timber.	(Jie, 2001)
Sihong Village, Heyuan Adm. Village, Jiuhe Township, Lijiang Municipality, Yunnan	166.7 km ²	The Naxi	Village elected committee consisting of three members but now it is a four-member village committee	Traditions and communities institutions are eroding. Market pressure on increased harvest of forest resources, illegal logging.	(Luo, 2001)
Lahuxi Village, Naduan Adm. Village, Lancang County, Yunnan	517.27 km ²	The Lahu	Traditionally, it was managed by four family-clan heads, but now is under the village committee.	Increased tea plantation have encroached into the sacred forest. Population increase of the Lahu communities also means growing demand for forest resources, hence increasing harvest and impact on the forest.	(Su, 2001)
Datu Village, the Buyi and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province	No data	The Miao	The Miao Chieftain of the Miao “King” enjoyed the highest respect. Under him, the village meeting would formulate village rules for CCAs, and other resources management.	Frequent and changeable forest police Market demands for timber and wildlife, unlike ecological services of soil conservation forest being rewarded nothing, can generate incomes.	(Zhang et al., 2001)

3.2. Case Studies

The following 13 CCAs cases were selected, please refer to the data base in annex for detailed information on each case:

Code	Site Name, Township and County	Prefecture & Provinces in China	Concerned Villages and Populations	Threats, conflicts and Issues	Ranks of Sacred Sites	Relationship with Formal Established Conservation Site	CCAs Governance
01	Dongba Village, Xiangpi Township, Gongjue County,	Changdu Prefecture, TAR	11 villages with a total population of 1,334.	CCA does not have legal authority punish outside illegal hunters, and no resources to finance their reforestation activities;	Village community Sacred sites	Non-protected areas, overlap with state forest	Self-help group initiated by key village individual, and then external group started to provide assistance. Snow Land Great Rivers Environmental Protection Association is working with them to establish conservation concession agreements with the county government.
02	The Duopu and Angzha Sacred Mountains near the Zongsa Monastery and its neighbouring communities. Dege County,	Ganzhi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province	the Puma township, the Dama township and the Yueba township the population is over 12,000	Tourism impact Conflict between endangered species list and cultural taboo	Monastery sacred mountains worshipped by population of 3 townships	Non-protected area, but inside the state forest	The Monastery and its key members play a very critical role reassuring sacred land practices and reaches agreement with the local government offices, securing management rights of CCAs.
03	The Namu and Shacheng Sacred Mt of the Yading Natural Village, Xiangcheng County	Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province	Yading village: 30 households and 181 villagers at over 4000 meters asl, and the Rencun Village of 74 households and 375 individuals at 3000 meters asl. Overall there are over 300 households, 1500 individuals living inside of the Yading National PA.	Tourists' impact, management of tourism business concession by the tourism bureau of the county government and PA system conflict with community-based horse tracking business	The village sacred site and regionally important Sacred mountains	Within the national Protected Area and the Man & Bio site	With no clearly designed organizational and decision-making structures, except some traditional values and respects to village elders and Buddhist lama individuals.

Code	Site Name, Township and County	Prefecture & Provinces in China	Concerned Villages and Populations	Threats, conflicts and Issues	Ranks of Sacred Sites	Relationship with Formal Established Conservation Site	CCAs Governance
04	The Jiabi village, Deqing County,	Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province	30 households	No very tangible conflicts, except disputed grazing boundaries with neighbouring communities	Village sacred site	Non-protected area, collective forest land	With no clearly designed organizational and decision-making structures, except some traditional values and respects to village elders and Buddhist lama individuals.
05	The Nagela Village Sacred Mountain CCA (also more recently known as the Shangri-la Valley, Shangri-la County,	Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan	the Nagela sacred mountains were worshipped by four natural villages: the Guiba (27 households), the Zuoliri (42 households), the Kelu (23 households) and the Zhongsong village (44 households).	No very tangible conflicts, but there is growing possibility of mining threats in the area;	Village sacred sites, as well as the sacred site for the population of the Gezha township	the core zone of the National Scenic Park, and the core zone of the 3 Parallel Rivers Natural World Heritage (Red Mt. Zone), but the boundary is yet to be demarcated on land.	With no clearly designed organizational and decision-making structures, except some traditional values and respects to village elders and Buddhist lama individuals.
06	The Zongzai Sacred Hill, Jisha Village, Xiaozhongdian Township, Shangri-la County,	Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province	over 90 households and 400 villagers of two village hamlets;	Mass tourism impact and unfair business concession management; cable car construction;	Village sacred site	Within the core zone of 3 Parallel Rivers Natural World Heritage, but the boundary (Qianhushan Zone) is yet to be demarcated on land;	With no clearly designed organizational and decision-making structures, except some traditional values and respects to village elders and Buddhist lama individuals.
07	The Humugu-napa CCA, Jiantang Township Shangri-la County,	Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province	Hamugu village, 39 household, about 170 residents	Unfair and unplanned business concession management in conflict with Ramsar wetland management plan	Village sacred site	Partial overlap with Ramsar wetland and Provincial Protected Area	A collective body established to manage CCA, with an emphasis on an eco-tourism cooperative operation;
08	Nanduozhage Sacred Mountain	Deqin county, Yunnan	Waha village, Adong Administrative village		Village sacred site	Non-protected area, state forest and collective forest;	With no clearly designed organizational and decision-making structures, except some traditional values and respects to village elders and Buddhist lama individuals.
09	Siyonggong Zhage Sacred Mountain	Siyonggong village, Deqin County, Yunnan Province	Siyonggong village with 44 household. Total population is 263.	Illegal hunting by outsiders, erosion of traditional values	Sacred site for several villages in the area	Non-protected area, state forest and collective forest;	With no clearly designed organizational and decision-making structures, except some traditional values and respects to village elders and Buddhist lama individuals.
10	Yongzhuding	Yanmen	The Chini village is with a	no obvious threats	Village sacred site	Adjacent to the	With no clearly designed

Code	Site Name, Township and County	Prefecture & Provinces in China	Concerned Villages and Populations	Threats, conflicts and Issues	Ranks of Sacred Sites	Relationship with Formal Established Conservation Site	CCAs Governance
	Sacred Mountain	Township, Deqin County, Deqin Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, NW Yunnan	total of 80 households and more than 30 members of monks, and to the Shide village with a total of over 90 households and over 40 members are monks.			Baimaxueshan State Protected Area	organizational and decision-making structures, except some traditional values and respects to village elders and Buddhist lama individuals. The red hat branch or the Nin-ma Pa Sect plays a key role, different from most cases that are mostly under the influence of the Ge-Lug Pa Sect
11	Cuochi Village, Qumahe Township, Qumalai County,	Yushu Prefecture, Qinghai Province	Cuochi Village, consisted of No 1, 2 and 3 natural villages with 230 households, totalling 920 people.	Tenure and natural resource conflict with its surrounding communities. Most recent conflict in 2007 was poachers from another township coming in to hunt marmots. Threats to biodiversity - degradation of grassland, conflict between livestock and wildlife, road construction, mining, railway, poaching, climate change. Threats to CCA governance - legal rights, relation with nature reserve and common objectives, limited involvement by villagers, tourism.	Village sacred site, but this CCA has the lowest population density amongst the 13 cases.	Entirely within the Suojia-Qumahe Core Protection Zone of the Sanjiangyuan (Three River Source) National Nature Reserve (150,000km ² area with 18 core protection zones), with an average altitude of 4,400m.	Key individual villagers and local environmental organizations (Friends of Wild Yak members) play key roles. Since October 2006, the management office of Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve has signed an Incentive Agreement with Cuochi Village, and gave stewardship of the 2,440 km ² to the village.
12	Yubeng Natural village, Xidang Administrative Village, Yunling Township	Deqing County, Diqin Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province	Yubeng-30 household, 144 residents, divided into two hamlets, the lower one at 3,350 meters asl, and upper one at 3,250 meters asl.	Tourism concessions, mass tourism, infrastructure such as roads	Village sacred sites	Entirely within the 3 Parallel Rives World Heritage (Meili-Baimaxueshan Zone), also entirely within the most important regional sacred mountain in SW China.	This CCA is located at heart of the larger sacred mountain, and pathway on the major pilgrim route -Kawagebo. The community takes great pride and stewardship in taking of the small and large sacred sites. But still it is with no clearly designed organizational and decision-making structures, except some traditional values and respects to village elders and Buddhist lama individuals.

Code	Site Name, Township and County	Prefecture & Provinces in China	Concerned Villages and Populations	Threats, conflicts and Issues	Ranks of Sacred Sites	Relationship with Formal Established Conservation Site	CCAs Governance
13	The Kawagebo Deqin County	Diqin Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province and Chayu-Zhuogong counties of the TAR	<p>The total local communities amount to 7,000 consist of 1,163 of the Guonian Ad. Village, 777 of the Sinong Ad. Village, 676 of the Xidang Ad. Village, 906 of the Hongpo Ad. Village, 1230 of the Chalitong Ad. Village, 2000 of the Adong Ad. Village, and 400 others from the Nuwa and Liutongjiang Ad. Village.</p> <p>Additionally, there are tens of thousands of Tibetan pilgrims annually from other Tibetan regions arriving at this site. In 2003, which is the water-sheep year of the Kawagebo mountain, the 60-year cycle, there are reportedly less than half millions pilgrims.</p>	Conflict of interest exists when it comes to conservation and development issue of Kawagebo area. Currently, within the communities, among the communities, communities and outsiders have acute conflict regarding land and forest tenure, developing local economy and conserving resources. Specifically, natural villages come into conflict on boundary of their forest, government comes into conflict with communities on land for tourism use, tourism-induced impact to local ecological environment and culture is also a problem recognized. Resource tenure, management and utilization are central issues in such conflict.	Largest sacred mountain, largest CCA in this study, encompasses many townships and counties, two provinces and two major regional river watersheds.	The 3 Parallel Rives World Heritage site (Meili-Baimaxueshan Zone), with ambiguous demarcation of boundary.	<p>It is the most difficult one to draw a clear map of stakeholders for this site.</p> <p>And it is with no clearly designed organizational and decision-making structures, except some traditional values and respects to village elders and Buddhist lama individuals.</p> <p>However, it remains the highest in rank of sacred mountain in SW China, it is amongst the most worshipped sacred mountains across Tibetan region.</p>



Case 13. On the road to Kawagebo pilgrim. Photo by Zeren Pingcuo 2003.

PART FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The patterns of commonalities and differences amongst the 13 cases are reviewed against the three primary questions of this research (see in methodology section). The answers to the three questions are all positive, but the following discussion hope to point to the key nuances of the sacred land practices in these 13 CCAs in the increasingly challenging reality and the legal-policy environment.

4.1. CCAs-Sacred Land Practices-Nested Values and Negotiated Practices

The 13 cases happen to be all related to Tibetan communities. Nearly 70% of the SW China Biodiversity Hotspot is home to the Khampa Tibetans and other ethnic groups. The Tibetan communities in these 13 cases have all demonstrated very strong linkage with their land through sacred land designation and worshipping. The sacred land practices show a hierarchical structure and not all communities or all members within one communities share the same sacred landscape.

The land-based belief system that associates people with land of immediate localities or with a further and bigger landscape is complicated. The way everyday people refer to immediate localities or unique features around residential environment as sacred in day-to-day activities of worshipping is different from that of the special occasions or cultural festivals when people tend to walk further and higher and for extended period of time. There are seven cases out of 13 that are exclusively the CCAs only for the mentioned communities. Four cases host both village sacred hills as well sacred sites recognized also by adjacent larger communities; and another two cases host sacred sites recognized by several tiers of pilgrims from regions near and afar.

No matter it is in farming or pastoral cycle, the community members are often times busy engaged in livelihood activities. Everyday worshipping takes place at a rather convenient location, such as at home, or in the family garden, on a tree, at the family water well, on a rock near by, or a small community sacred hill within easy walking distance. All disturbing acts, such as to pee, to dig, to make the place untidy are all regarded offensive to the household deity.

And the more localized, the closer the relationship it bears with individual welfare or the means of household livelihood. People

worship for different purposes, such as for the health of livestock, kids and the sick, or for the safety reasons before setting off on a long journey. Such activities take place on daily bases. Communities' member would make



Case 07.
Zongzai Sacred
Hill in Jisha

Photo by Li Bo,
2005.

donations to or make special promises for a visit to the larger sacred sites when they can free themselves from the busy schedule or when the next special occasion arrives for a grand visit. They would collect their accumulated offerings when they can travel to the larger sites to keep their promises.

For such localized and household-based sacred land, the worshipping system is very specific. The sacred sites vary across the clans within one community. One household will suffer bad luck if worshipping a sacred site



Case 10 Foreground is the chini village, and the at the far top side, two little peaks are two sacred mountains to two villages explained in the neighbouring picture.



Case 10 The gods of two village sacred mountains to the right- the Lajian in red to the Chini village , and the Jiachou in green to the Shide village. The sacred mountain god to the left is the largest sacred mountain in the region.

of different family origin. Household worshipping practices went through a history co-involved with the changing history of family kinship as the result of family population changes and migration patterns. Such sense of attachment to a place, or to a community is unique. The sense of belonging to the sacred land does not follow the administrative boundary however. There is a nuanced, yet silent negotiation at the household level in terms of the location of the household sacred sites, and the ways to deal with the consequences as the result of land use changes. In Case 6, when household sacred sites were lost to logging, new road construction, the youth tend to show less care and even forgo other sacred land worshipping activities.

Looking beyond the household-based sacred land, there are higher level or several layers of sacred land typically epitomized by a well respected monastery located at the higher mountain. In most of the 13 cases, there is an evident pattern that the communities supporting significant number of Lamas in the monastery, tend to treat sacred sites with more care and respects. And it is at this geographically higher and culturally congregating high ground that the communities, despite worshipping different small sacred sites object themselves to the same sacred destination for protection and spiritual pilgrim. Such linkages between the small and larger sacred sites are what is referred to as nested religious and cultural values.

Additionally, there have been changes to the practices of visiting larger sacred sites. There used to be the choices of small family clans or even individual households as to when to pay pilgrim visit to the larger sites. But a consensus on forest fire control have reached between the monastery and forest management bureau, as the result, a few communities living around a larger sacred mountain in a case not selected for this study (not enough information collected for the study) are now visiting the site together at special festival occasions, as the practices of burning and fire will reduce the management workload and frequent risks of unintended forest fire. It seems that such negotiation not only take place as a tradition, but also has taken place between government resources management agencies and religious institutions.



Case 01 Dongba community reforestation at sacred site. Photo by Shen Xiaoli 2005.

In conclusion, the nested values and negotiated practices of sacred land require sufficient sensitivity and in-depth social and cultural skills to recognize the complexity and nuances in the sacred land hierarchical structures. Two major rationales are very critical:

Firstly, looking up to lofty and larger sacred mountains alone runs the risks of missing the foundation of the sacred land practices, namely, the smaller household-based sacred sites. It would be like seeing the river without water sources; but only value smaller household-based sacred sites without recognizing the value of large sites is equally questionable. The larger sites behold culturally unifying forces as the lighthouses for all pilgrims.

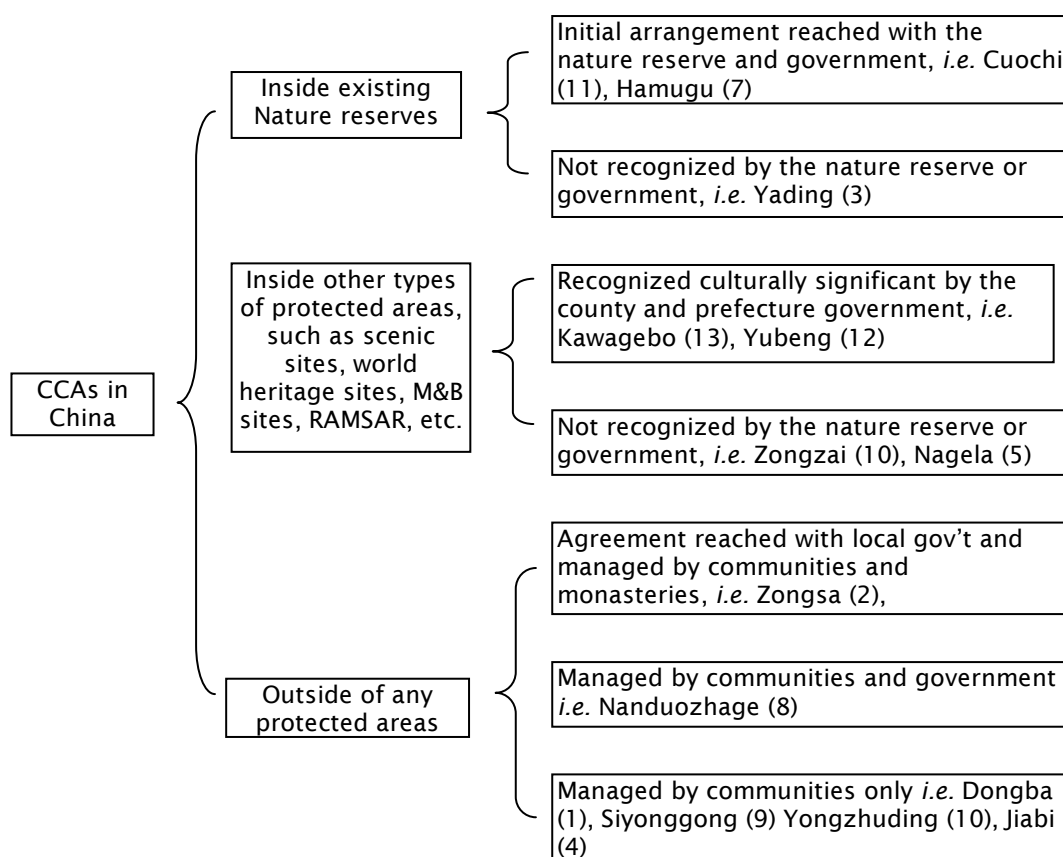
Secondly, the current sacred landscapes system more often than not, does not follow the government administrative boundaries, let alone to say the differences of sacred landscape between the different major Tibetan Buddhism sects. It would be extremely naïve to believe sacred mountains are all sacred for all Tibetans. Therefore, CCAs of the same ethnic group, can be very specific to areas, and to communities.

Government PAs, CMPAS, and PPAS³, it hopes to depict through the 13 cases, diagnostic and explorative road map for further CCAs studies in SW China. The following factors should come into play when examining issues of CCAs governance in SW China in the future.

- ❖ All 13 cases are found in four western provinces critical to the SW China Biodiversity Hotspot, namely, the TAR, Qinghai, Sichuan and Yunnan. Most of the hosting counties, or even the prefecture governments mentioned in the 13 cases, are all applicable for the constitutional law - **the Regional Autonomy Law for the Ethnic Groups** issued in 1984. This law entitles greater flexibility to the autonomous county and prefecture government to legislate locally in the best interests of the core local ethnic groups. But there is little evidence that these local government have yet shown local legislative innovations on promoting elements of CCAs. This however, does hold extra potential in theory and in practice, to recognize, experiment, and replicate CCAs within their own administrative boundaries if there are enough local political will and capacity of technical know-how amongst local government resource managers.
- ❖ China's civil society is still at its early self-discovery mode. In the Western regions, the awareness of civil action is at its infancy, the ability to take the advantage of statutory legal system and a series of rural policies favourable to villagers is very minimal in comparison to the coastal and eastern regions.
- ❖ Most INGOs or NGOs in the field of conservation in Western provinces have in the past focused on PAs system, specifically on capacity building, species/habitat scientific studies and the effectiveness of protected area management. When co-management was applied, it was done largely to assist the PAs to implement their perspective management agenda with more communities' cooperation. Community-oriented work on CCAs is only at its pilot mood in less than five years. There are about half out of the 13 cases that an NGOs is involved, but their impact on CCAs in practices and in related policies, is rather positive, comparing to the impact of the external market and pace of resource extraction that are potentially incompatible to the function of CCAs. In other words, comparing to the vast needs of promoting CCAs recognition in the PAs system in China, NGOs involvement is still extremely limited. NGOs or INGOs will have to gain more in-depth understanding through their own pilot work, so that to appreciate the complexity of reaching community-

³ The recent active discussions (April –August 2007) on CCAs on the CEESP list between Michael Ferguson (August 01) Ashish Kothari (August 02, May 27, April 28. and April 18), Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend (April 20,) Stan Stevens (May 16), Jacques POLLINI (April 27), Vololoniaina RASOARIMANANA (April 19), Viviane Weitzner (April 18), etc. are very useful to appreciate the overall issues and concerns in the CCAs regional studies. A important focus is on identification of CCAs, its differences with CMPAs, as well as calling for great caution to differing the community endorsed CCAs from the community-sited CCAs.

Chart 1. CCA category and relationship with China's Protected Area System



initiated, and community-endorsed CCAs arrangements with negotiated management mandates of the government and the communities.

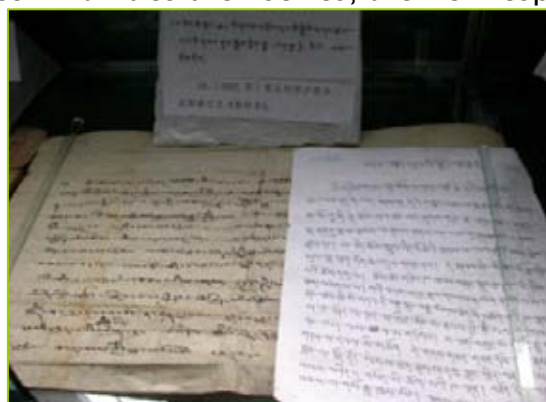
- ❖ As shown in Chart one, there are six out of 13 CCAs cases that are outside of established protected areas, or other conservation status. The remaining seven cases are found inside of the PAs, and four out of this seven cases have reached some agreement with government. But the pilot scale is far from adequate to be conclusive on CCAs agreement. Nevertheless it is a constructive and hopeful effort.

4.2.2 Positive Signs of Support and Collaboration

Despite overall ignorance on CCAs practices and lack of institutional recognition in form of legal and financial support in these 13 cases, there are reasons for some optimism. The Case of Cuochi (coded 11) in a period of less than two years, through both local Tibetan NGOs, as well as INGOs effort, one of the largest land mass under village collective grazing use rights – 2400 km² for about 900 villagers, the Cuochi village of 230 households are working in form of CCAs reaching agreements with the

Sanjiangyuan National Nature Reserve on shared management objectives. Such agreements yet to be tested over times. The agreement allows the community to continue to graze in the core zone of the PAs, and continues to protect and accesses their sacred land. In exchange, they participate in monitoring and patrolling of resources following agreed upon methodologies and tools. It will need some time along with legislative progress to find out whether the Cuochi case fits better in the CMPAs or indeed CCAs arrangements, or the both.

In Zongsa Monastery case (coded 02), it is the monastery and its key ministering Lama who negotiated with three township government offices to secure management rights of state forest land where the sacred land is located. In this case, the sacred land inside of the state forest boundary has been acknowledged as customary form of land use by the local township government. In a few other cases, key monastery individuals, such as case coded 05, 06, 08, 09 and 10, who are or were originally from the targeted communities themselves, the well-respected re-incarnated Buddha, helped to



Case 04.
Jiabi Village.
Community
rules
established
in 1805.

Photo by
Yang
Fangyi,
2007.

reach community consensus and agreements of commitment to act on patrolling or specific rules of dos and don'ts in the history. In Nienqin Kawagebo case (coded 13), the site, despite being vast, beholds cultural flagship significance, the

customary recognition or “de facto” recognition by local government officials certainly plays a role in future designation and management of the area as the site is culturally so important to large population. Here “de facto” is an inappropriate term to capture a dilemma between two laws. According to **the Regional Autonomy Law for the Ethnic Groups**, sacred land practices theoretically should be categorized legally as religious practices and therefore is under the protection of the constitution. State forest, however, is under the protection of the Forest Law. When the Autonomy Law and Forest Law overlap, the local officials who are cognizant of local cultures are likely to face a dilemma.

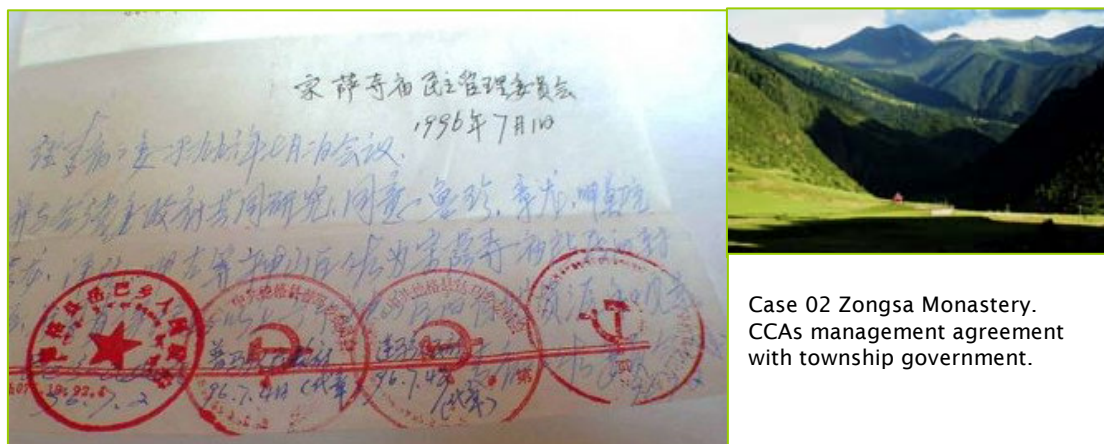
4.2.3 Tangible Institutions and Intangible Cultural Practices

One key aspect of question number two in this study is to scrutinize institutional arrangements responsible for decision-making, management, and monitoring in a CCA. There are 8 CCAs out of 13 cases, however, where we do not find clear signs of decision-making structures that produced written rules and objectives for the management of CCAs. We still gave

positive answers to the three primary questions to name them CCAs. We are asking ourselves if the answers to question one and question three are positive, what does it mean to have a negative answer to question number two and therefore fail to name a CCA? Is it possible to have this situation? In this situation, cultural practices of sacred land seem to be intangible, can intangible cultural practices still lead to a CCA? And further more how cultural means, especially intangible to outsiders who play by scientific knowledge, can be illustrated and presented at the table where CCAs are to be conveyed and negotiated in the continuum of protected areas governance matrix?

On the CEESP CCAs regional study, several members have pointed out some critical views. Micheal Forguson puts that “CCAs are an excellent tool for the cross-cultural recognition and inclusion of indigenous customary practices in protected area system”. Another member puts similarly, devising institutions with outside legislations might run the risk of straightjacket the enormous diversity of CCA institutions and rules and arrangements into one uniform arrangement. It is very tricky to decipher the hidden institution, with outsiders’ value and professional background.

When faced with our situations where tangible CCA institution is not found, does it mean that some variation of the CCA institution does not exist? Or customary institutions and rules just appear to the outsiders, as “invisible”, “flexible and informal”, but in fact it is “monolithic and imperceptible”. We feel that we should not be hasty in our conclusion that



Case 02 Zongsa Monastery.
CCAs management agreement
with township government.

the community is in bad shape and lack of community organization. It is easier to navigate in a situation where an NGO finds a CCA site with very active and coherent structure. The chance is that there is at least one active community member who is key and capable of capturing the essence of communications between the insiders and outsiders. It is through those individuals who have cultured eyes and convincing communication skills and commitment to the CCAs issues, that outside NGOs can quickly grasp the “community handles” and establish its community work. Yet, there are also examples, community elites can turn out to be harmful too, when community

consensus and collective processes are compromised because of the shortcuts through the elites.

Therefore, no matter in the eight cases with unclear institutions or in the seven cases in which local collective initiatives or new institutions with the help of outsiders, we want to recognize the roles of tangible institutions and intangible culture practices. The further studies on CCAs in SW China needs to explore further the indicators and tools to work on the both scenario.

4.3 The Policy and Legislative Initiative for the CCAs

There are five different sets of policies and laws reviewed as we believe they are either direct forces behind protected area management or undercurrents of socio-economic transformation in rural communities. But together, the impact ranges from community's relationships with and participation in establishment and management of protected areas, to community's access to natural resources, collective decision-making about their livelihoods and resource management. The former is represented by the policy on small protected areas, and the new protected areas law in the legislative making; the later is represented by the Organic Law, the collective forest property reform policy, a series of "San Nong" (agriculture, village, and farmers – all referring to wider) policies. Overall, we recognize there is great potential that CCAs should be piloted and replicated in Western provinces, even though considerable threats are also evident.

4.3.1 The Small Protected Areas since 1992

It was reported that over 60,000 Small Protected Areas with an accumulated size of 1.5 million hec., were established and registered in the State Forest system in 2006. The rapid growth of the small protected areas establishment was the consequence of the SFA deliberate promotion in 2004 based on the self-initiated effort of the provincial forest bureaus in Fujian and Zhejiang Provinces in the coastal region dating back to 1992. In the southern coastal region, population density is amongst the highest in China, the area available to be designated as the conventional national nature reserve is very limited, but there are small ecosystems or land with special ecological concerns that are still important to be protected, some of these areas are also culturally important for the local communities. Hence, in 1992, the Maoyuan County Government in Fujian Province started the trends to establish small protected areas, and consequently, the provincial legislative body passed special bill to safeguard this practice.(Lu, 2006) The neighbouring provinces all followed suit. Such initiative has seen positive influence on the State Forest Bureau. In a SFA memo in 2005, it was called for an effort to increase the nation-wide effort on establishment of protected areas in two ways: First, is to encourage establishing more mega-scale national nature reserves covering the wholesome populations of targeted wildlife and complete ecosystems in the sparsely populated western regions,

and second, is to establish more small protected areas in the middle to eastern China where it is densely populated yet protection of water source, landscape, species habitats, corridors for better connectivity between habitats is vital. (SFA, 2005b)

Even though, the SFA statements suggest that the key to establishment of small protected areas is citizen's voluntary action in application, management and financing. Government agencies only provide small finance assistance or complement it with natural forest regeneration fund – a large program already established for protection of natural forests nation-wide. In the provincial legislation of Fujian and Guangdong, it even makes clear there are three categories for establishing small protected areas, namely the small protected areas by private citizens, by government, and by military. But in practice, it is apparent that the small protected areas are a smart adaptation of the conventional practices of protected areas in the densely populated eastern regions. The implementation of this policy is still very governmental. The management objectives are predominantly placed on conserving small but critical forest lands, wildlife species, ecosystem services. It is less clear how the government agencies in the coastal region deal with small protected areas where the management mandate of a civil voluntary effort is different from that of the conventional protection approach. And it is even less clear how the two could be integrated. The literature also does not document how rural groups in Eastern China would design the decision-making mechanism for the effective management of such small protected areas.

The following two tables (Wang et al., 2006) represent one view and approach to categorize and assess the small protected areas in the Eastern China. It was done by a group of researchers at the School of Protected Areas of Beijing Forestry University, and funded by the Extension Program of the State Forest Bureau.

Table 1 - Classifications of the Small Protected Areas

Type	Sub-type and its Specific Style	Code	IUCN category
Maintaining Intact Ecosystem I	Natural Ecosystem	I ₁	I _a
	Wildlife Sanctuary	I ₂	IV
	Natural Monuments	I ₃	III
Natural Landscape II	Ancient Forest/ Trees	II ₁	V
	Scenic Landscape and Forest Zones	II ₂	V
	Traditional Cultivation of Domesticated Species	III ₁	VI
Sustainable Resources Use III	Wild Relative Species	III ₂	IV
	Continually Harvest Resources	III ₃	VI
	Preventative services	IV ₁	--
Specific Ecological Functions IV	Soil Conservation	IV ₂	--
	Other Special functions	IV ₃	--
	Ancient Human & Cultural Archaeology Relics	V ₁	III
Historic and Cultural Value V	Preserved Sites of Historical Figures	V ₂	--
	Sites of Contemporary Revolutionary Significance	V ₃	--
	Cemetery for the Honorable	V ₄	--

Note for the above table: The Type I - Maintaining Intact Ecosystem refers to the natural areas which contain either primary or secondary ecosystem and have high value in scientific research. The purpose of this type is to preserve biodiversity in situ and/or natural process in the area. Type II - the Natural Landscape is to offer recreation to residents. Type III - Sustainable Resources Use has three sub-types: 1) the areas to conserve traditional domesticated Species, 2) the areas to protect the wild relative species or varieties, 3) the areas to maintain continuous harvest of forest products. Type IV - Specific Ecological Functions is to secure its ecological service, including preventing natural disasters, maintaining water and soil, etc. The location is very important when establishing these protected areas. Type V - Historic and Cultural Value is to protect and manage sites of cultural, traditional, and political significance.

Table 2 - Assessment of Extent of Self-reliance, Profitability, and External Assistance

Type	I ₁	I ₂	I ₃	II ₁	II ₂	III ₁	III ₂	III ₃	IV ₁	IV ₂	IV ₃	V ₁	V ₂	V ₃	V ₄
<i>Self-reliance</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
<i>Profitability</i>	<i>VS</i>	<i>VS</i>	<i>VS</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>VS</i>	<i>VS</i>	<i>RS</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>VS</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>VS</i>
<i>Extl. Assistance</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>RL</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>RL</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>RL</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>M</i>

Note: W-Weak
H-Highest
M-medium;
V-Vary
N-No need for external assistance
S-strong
VS-very strong
RS-relatively small
RL-relatively low

The point to cite the two tables here is to highlight that the evident **governmental mandate promoting small protected areas predominantly in the coastal provinces in the interests of ecosystem protection is yet to be expended to accommodate the interests of community livelihood or cultural, faith and traditional values.** The classification of types and sub-types, except under Type III with strong self-reliance, otherwise self-reliance has been categorically weak and external assistance is indispensable, even if profitability is very strong under Type I, supposedly due to operation of tourism related business concessions. If community livelihood or cultural values are championed for the small protected areas, self-reliance might be high.

State Forest Administration's policy on small protected areas however, can provide potential leverage to CCAs promotion in the western regions if all positive elements in this policy are mobilized. But one has to caution the danger of incorporating CCAs practice hastily based on the experience gained in the Eastern or coastal region. CCAs in the western regions is different from small protected area in that CCAs has to take consideration of the land-based faith practices and collective moods of livelihood which needs a different set of perspectives and skills when working with local communities. Otherwise, the current practices of government-led small protected areas, when transplanted to the vast western region where large protected areas have been the norm of conservation, it will be running a risk of repeating a old drink in a new bottle. The communities has to compete in vain with large PAs for resources, **there is also a danger that the government-led CCAs in the Eastern model of small protected areas will be merely an exercise of standardizing, therefore straitjacketing the diversity of the CCAs institutions at different sites, and with different ethnic groups or sub-groups.**

4.3.2 New Protected Area Law

The final draft of the Law on Protected Areas of the People's Republic China (NCSC, 2006) was released on May 30 2006 for public comments and evaluation. This was the result of participatory consultative processes. Comparing with the Regulations on the Protected Areas (ENCSC, 1994), a series of progress have been achieved. There was not even a word of "community" mentioned in the 1994 regulation, but it has guided an important decade of PAs development, particularly in Western China.

In the draft issued in 2006, there are several encouraging progress with regard to inclusion of community and concerns for their lack of participation. This is pointing to a good direction for CCAs advocacy in the near future. The major articles potentially concerning the community in general or the CCAs in Article 63, is summarized as the following:

- Article 12 on Public Participation – the decision on establishment, modification of the protected areas should consider public hearing and other means of soliciting public comments.
- Article 13 on the Safeguard of Local Communities in the Protected Areas – under the guidance of the PAs, the local communities should be entitled to continue the way of their livelihood. If feasible, the communities should be encouraged in participating in the management of the PAs.
- Article 15 on Compensation Mechanism – when establishment of the PAs involves limiting the access to and quantity of harvest of natural resources which local communities are entitled legally to, prior to implementation, fair compensation arrangements should be reached through consultation with communities following proper procedures. Whenever resettlement option is attempted, proper resettlement policies should apply.
- Article 35 on Co-management – through reaching agreements with communities, the PAs may engage communities in management of the PAs, and promote harmonious development between the communities and the PAs.
- Article 63 on Establishment of the Small Protected Areas – The communities in town or in village, or business enterprises, can establish small protected areas of all categories under the conditions of non-profit and self-finance. The application should be submitted to Protected Areas Management Administration higher than the county government. The established small protected is legally recognized. The concerned government of provinces, autonomous prefectures and municipalities, should formulate detailed management policies for this purpose.

4.3.3 Policy on Property Reform of the Collective Forest

This policy can date back to 2003 when a series of piloting reform activities were carried out in coastal provinces of Fujian, Jiangxi provinces. The purpose is to create market incentives for efficient timber trade and rural livelihood through incentive-based reforestation, forest management, and timber or non-timbered forest products, and at the same time yield better ecological services. It is expected to distribute collective forest tenure to individual households with clear property rights arrangement, and creating enabling market conditions for forest products, and conditions for easy transaction of individual forest property.

58% of forested land in China or 1.6 million km² are in collective property. Therefore, from the successful experiences in the coastal provinces, the policy makers in the central government came to realize the forest resources in collective property is important ecologically and economically for the rural population and for the country.



Case 03. Threat of tourism. Photo from internet.

(SFA, 2006) Vice premier, Hui Liangyu, made a working trip to Yunnan Province in 2006, hoping to launch a wide-range replication of coastal experience in collective forest reform, and in his speech at the national conference on forest collective property reform, he attached greater importance to this effort. This is as important as the agriculture land household responsibility policy in the 1980s and he expressed firm determination and encouragement for all applicable western provinces to implement this policy. (Hui, 2006)

Without comparing the fundamental differences between the rural livelihood in the coastal region and in the western provinces where the rural community livelihood unlike the former, is still very much inter-woven with the collective resource property, this policy would cause potential harm than good to the collective forests and communities in the SW China. Not only privatization of collective forest would erode traditions and cultures such as those demonstrated in CCAs, but also cause wide-spread conflicts amongst communities. A great caution and in-field studies are rendered very critical before it is widely replicated. As experts in the Institute of Economic Development and Research in the SAF have implied, blanket application of privatizing collective forests in a rapid campaign style potentially repeats the

similar unintended mistakes made in previous forest policies.(Liu, 2007)
This policy is viewed one of the hanging threats to some communities whose CCAs sites are to be re-appropriated to the individual households. But so far, the 13 cases have not identified a real threat from this policy.

4.3.4 Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of the People's Republic of China

This is one of the most fundamental laws in terms of setting up new village institutions. If interpreted to the best interests of the CCAs on the collective consensual bases, this bill should be supportive to the CCAs. Again, the following is to give a general impression about the bill. There are 30 articles in total.

- Article 2 The villagers committee is the primary mass organization of self-government, in which the villagers manage their own affairs, educate themselves and serve their own needs and in which election is conducted, decision adopted, administration maintained and supervision exercised by democratic means.
- The villagers committee shall manage the public affairs and public welfare undertakings of the village, mediate disputes among the villagers, help maintain public order, and convey the villagers' opinions and demands and make suggestions to the people's government.
- Article 4 The people's government of a township, a nationality township or a town shall guide, support and help the villagers committees in their work, but may not interfere with the affairs that lawfully fall within the scope of the villagers self-government.
- The members of a villagers committee shall include an appropriate number of women. In a village where people from more than one ethnic group live, they shall include a member or members from the ethnic group or groups with a smaller population.
- Article 10 A villagers committee may, on the basis of the residential areas of the villagers, establish a number of villagers groups, the leaders of which shall be elected at the meetings of the groups.
- Article 11 The chairman, vice-chairman (vice-chairmen) and members of a villagers committee shall be elected directly by the villagers. No organization or individual may designate, appoint or replace any member of a villagers committee.
- The term of office for a villagers committee is three years; a new committee shall be elected at the expiration of the three years without delay.
- Article 13 Election of a villagers committee shall be presided over by a villagers electoral committee. Members of the electoral committee shall be elected by a villagers assembly or by all the villagers groups.
- Article 16 A group of at least one-fifth of the villagers who have the right to elect in the village may propose the removal from office of members of the villagers committee. In the proposal, the reasons for the removal shall be stated. The member of the villagers committee

proposed to be removed from office shall have the right to present a statement in his own defence. The villagers committee shall convene a villagers assembly without delay, at which the proposal for the removal shall be voted. The removal from office of a member of the villagers committee shall be adopted by a simple majority vote of the villagers who have the right to elect.

- Article 17 A villagers assembly shall be composed of villagers at or above the age of 18 in a village.
- The villagers assembly shall be convened with a simple majority participation of the villagers at or above the age of 18 or with the participation of the representatives from at least two-thirds of the households in the village, and every decision shall be adopted by a simple majority vote of the villagers present. When necessary, representatives of the enterprises, institutions and mass organizations located in the village may be invited to attend the villagers assembly without the right to vote.

There are numerous studies on the implementation of this law, particularly in the Northern or eastern regions. Those studies typically focus on the transparency and election processes, and gradually more on the performance of elected leaders after election. It is not uncommon this law is implemented effectively and yield positive result in the rural area where farmers are better informed. But very little study has brought the village democracy as the result of organic law to bear on issues of governance on the collective natural resources in mountainous region of Western China. But libo's(LI, 2006; LI, 2003) work on world heritage management in the Three Parallel River World Heritage has shown that, firstly the organic law implemented at the administrative village level mismatches the needs of collective resource decision-making at the natural village level, secondly ethnic groups with extra difficulty of understanding legal language and accessing legal services often times than not are not capable of defending their legal rights, thirdly there is a real financial cost to bring two third of the collective to reach consensus, and they are often time being taken advantage of because of lack of resources to practise democracy.



Case 05 Angweng Buddha in Gunba School. Photo by Li Bo, 2005

4.3.5 Policy on “Village, Villagers, and Agriculture⁴ (the *San Nong*)” and Policy on Building New Socialist Village

Under this title, there are a series of policies and implementation regulations for the former, which puts special emphasis on the four rights rural citizens are entitled to, namely, the rights to information, the rights to participate, the rights to make decisions and the rights to monitor affairs significant to their livelihood and natural resources management. The later comes with exemption of all rural taxation, and new innovative, and increased resource allocation to the rural areas aiming at improving the living environment and livelihood. But so far the result is mixed. Experts on Chinese rural societies and development puts that prescriptive approaches based on the urban perspectives are in doubts. However, there is no reason CCAs can not take advantage of these policies through robust and constructive interpretation and dialogue with local officials.



Lower left: case 05, Nagela community collecting herbs for cash income in their forests;

Lower right: *Saussurea* sp, medicinal use;

Upper left: *Meconopsis* sp., medicinal use;

Upper right: *Fritillaria* sp., bulb for medicinal use

Photos by Li Bo, 2004.

⁴ Agriculture here does not just refer to those who work on land through growing crops. It's used to refer to all those who making a living in rural settings, including grazing communities.

PART FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

In China, as the result of last 20 years of resource-based rapid economic development, there is no vacuum land or isolated regions that are intact from the influences of the state resource management policies or from market penetration. Therefore, this study is not aimed at identifying the “isolated case” of genuine CCAs, neither has this study attempted to understand the way to maintain these isolated cases. The hopeful result will serve as some stepping stones in SW China for mainstreaming CCAs as part of protected areas management systems and as a complimentary approach to area directly under the control of government agencies. This would help to highlight the values and the world views behind the CCA phenomena at a time when human societies search for ways to enrich sustainable development.

Through the literature reviews, and the 13 case studies, the findings are encouraging but also alarming urging more CCAs work to be undertaken soon.

First, there is no once-size fits all working definition, or model of CCAs across SW China region, where many groups maintain sacred land practices. And among them, the Tibetans is probably the one practising it on the largest accumulated land area.

Second, CCAs exist in different sizes, the 13 cases range from as small as 30 hectares, or as big as thousands of hectares. CCAs can be found on exclusively collective forest, it can also be found in one household's family land, but most importantly, a great number of them are overlapping or co-existing in one or multiple forms of protected areas.

Third, CCAs, are found in a nested hierarchical structure. It is important to recognize the significance of sacred land at the household level and throughout to the regionally significant ones. Particularly the ones at the household level are most vulnerable. Without such foundation of day-to-day attachment and practices, the lofty ones at the top might start to loose its cultural constituency. More researches on this issue in connection with recent collective forest property reform policy and mass tourism development policies should be carried out urgently.

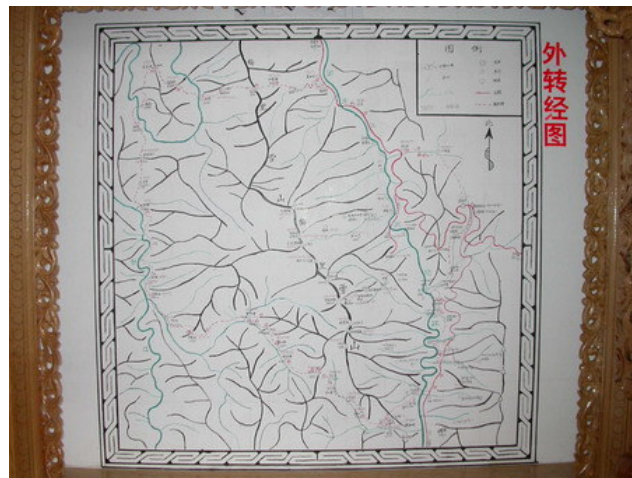
Fourth, there are still varying size of ecologically sound forest, mountain, water body harbouring fauna and flora, or providing essential ecosystem services to the local or others. And importantly, there are still expressed linkages between means of local livelihood and their natural resources, and strong concern to maintain such linkages;

Fifth, Community stills demonstrates considerable level of internal cultural consensus and determination to hold on to their cultural practices of

sacred land. There are still respected individual elders or well-trusted middle aged members from the communities, and monasteries or monastery individuals who show great concerns to endangered sacred land. They are the central pillars supporting traditional institutions in most cases rather intangible to outsiders.

Sixth, Communities overall are alert of danger of resource exploitation – the highest risk to CCAs. In practices, the short-term economic benefits are increasingly turning the communities, particularly in four of the case studies more heterogeneous. With little access and understanding of laws and policies, the community's ability in consensus building and negotiation is at great test.

Seven, The property rights system does not yet work in favour of recognizing CCAs, but there is a shared optimism that CCAs in western provinces are on the rise to be piloted and supported by the new laws of the protected areas. We believe that the concept of CCAs is likely to be recognized in the future.



Case 13 Kawagebo Pilgrim Map

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