

ICCA Consortium

Strategic Plan

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1 Introduction

The ICCA Consortium is a global ‘movement organisation’ that promotes social change to enhance equity in conservation. It does this by working with indigenous peoples and local communities to secure appropriate recognition and support of their own conserved territories and areas. These territories and areas are termed ‘ICCAs’.¹

The work of the Consortium is set within the broader vision of conserving biodiversity and ecological functions, nurturing the sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing of indigenous peoples and local communities, and implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples — including self-determination and the full respect of their cultural diversity and collective and individual rights and responsibilities.

The Consortium was formally established in 2010, growing out of earlier movements, networks, and collaborations designed to shift global conservation policies and practices in ways that would be more supportive of the common rights, responsibilities, values, and management systems of indigenous peoples and local communities. The Consortium has, during its history, played an important role in the increasing recognition of the role played by conservation by indigenous peoples and local communities through a vast diversity of ICCAs, in conservation policy and practice at global, regional, and national levels. It has played an important role moving ICCAs into the conservation mainstream, particularly within key policy arenas such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and IUCN, and generating greater support for the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities. The Consortium has grown rapidly as a member-based network, now including 109 organizational Members and 240 (and counting) individual ‘Honorary’ members. This membership increasingly includes many organisations, indigenous communities, and national networks that are leading the facilitation and support of ICCAs in their own communities and countries.

This strategic plan² is designed to guide the next phase of the Consortium’s development leading up to the end of its first decade of life in 2020 and ushering in the second one.

¹ The term ICCAs is an abbreviation for “territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities”. It was first used as “CCAs” before the World Parks Congress (Durban 2003), when it stood for “community conserved area”. Subsequently it was expanded to “indigenous and community conserved areas”, generating the acronym “ICCAs”. The latter is retained today even as the concept has been better understood and made explicit and “ICCAs” is no longer an acronym but an abbreviation. The ICCA Consortium recommends retaining and using the equivalent local terms that represent unique meanings for unique peoples and communities and using “ICCAs” for intercultural communication only.

² The strategic plan was developed during the course of 2016 through a range of consultations with members and other Consortium partners and allies, including an online survey, select interviews, a consultative session with members at the World Conservation Congress in Hawaii, and a one-day workshop held in conjunction with the 2016 General Assembly. The strategy was further reviewed by the steering committee and revised based on their input in April and May 2017. Maliasili Initiatives, a member organisation of the Consortium with expertise in organizational development and strategy, facilitated the entire strategic planning process.

The Consortium has grown into an important and influential network valued by its diverse membership, and with a growing suite of collaborators and partners around the world. It has achieved some of the things it was first established to do, even while the threats facing local and indigenous conservation systems and values intensifies across much of the planet. The strategic plan focuses the Consortium's work around key priorities such as continuing its critical role as a champion of ICCAs in global conservation policy processes, and increasing its ability to support vibrant national networks of ICCAs. In order to enable a growing global network such as the Consortium to thrive, the plan also focuses on key organizational priorities related to communications, human resources, funding growth, membership, and its organizational structure. The aspiration of the plan is to provide a clear sense of direction and to map out key organizational priorities that can enable the Consortium to continue to evolve in response to the needs of its Members, face new and growing challenges around the world, and capitalize on the opportunities that it has helped create.

Defining 'ICCAs'

Three features are used by the ICCA Consortium to "identify" these areas:

- ***An indigenous people or local community possesses a close and profound relationship with a site (territory, area, habitat of a species)*** – a relationship embedded in local culture, sense of identity and/or dependence for livelihood and well being.
- ***The people or the community has been de facto and/or de jure governing the site.*** In other words, it has had through time the capacity to develop and enforce management decisions.
- The people's or community's ***management decisions and efforts have been positive for the conservation*** of habitats, species, genetic diversity, ecological functions and associated cultural values (regardless of the conscious objective of management).

2 Background

The ICCA Consortium emerged from the close collaboration of like-minded individuals and organisations that started working together in the early 1990s through a number of IUCN voluntary networks that became the main motor of work on ICCAs. By 2008, this growing group of informal allies and collaborators decided to create the ICCA Consortium as an informal, voluntary network pursuing a jointly agreed work plan. No financial support was available but the people and organisations that brought it forward worked for it as volunteers, at times succeeding in fundraising to organise specific events, carry out research and community-based support and develop publications. Soon, however, the need became recognised for the Consortium to become a formal entity, and in 2010 the ICCA Consortium Association was established as an international non-profit association under Swiss Law. The association could fundraise for specific initiatives and engage even more forcefully to promote ICCA-supportive international policies, highlight exemplary cases at the local level and engage with country-specific analyses, mutual support and advocacy.

Since 2010, the membership of the Consortium has grown at a rate of about 20% annually. As of early 2017, the membership spans more than 75 countries and includes:

- 109 Member organisations (CBOs, IPOs, coalitions and federations of CBOs and IPOs, NGOs) that work at local, national and regional level; and
- More than 240 individual Honorary members (individual experts and activists).

The Consortium's main achievements have been in the global conservation policy arena; in supporting the development of a growing set of national coalitions or networks promoting ICCAs; in the production of a considerable volume of technical and policy analyses pertaining to ICCAs; and in directly supporting local ICCAs and their advocates in a range of ways.

At the global scale, today ICCAs are known in the conservation community and embedded in international biodiversity law and conservation policy as one of the four main recognised governance types for protected areas and increasingly for "other effective area-based conservation measures" (conserved areas). In particular, they are recognized in a range of decisions adopted by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), including on protected areas, Articles 8(j) and 10(c), financial mechanisms and resource mobilization, sustainable development, ecosystem conservation and restoration, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and agricultural biodiversity.

ICCAs are the focus of a dedicated international registry of the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre and some are included in the World Database on Protected Areas. As countries work to reach the objectives of the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 ('Aichi Targets'), the Consortium is providing guidance on how appropriately recognizing and supporting ICCAs can enhance governance for both protected and conserved areas and contribute to the achievement of *all* Aichi Targets.

A key contribution of the Consortium to this mainstreaming of ICCAs on the global policy stage has been the production of a considerable volume of technical guidance, documentation and analyses of ICCAs. The Consortium has worked to document ICCAs in many different local and national contexts, review national legal and policy systems in relation to the recognition and support of ICCAs, and create useful materials to help different actors in recognizing, protecting, and managing ICCAs.

At the national scale, ICCA-dedicated networks, federations and coalitions have emerged in countries as diverse as the Philippines, Iran, Senegal, DRC, Chile, China, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Colombia, Nepal, Spain, Taiwan and Vietnam. They explore diverse options for ICCA recognition and support and are actively promoting appropriate local conservation models and practices. These national networks, and their memberships, provide a key means of support for influencing national policy processes, and for supporting local ICCAs through information, technical assistance, external partnerships, and other resources available through a global network such as the Consortium.

3 Situational Analysis

The Consortium today has become a leading global network championing territorial and area-based stewardship by indigenous peoples and local communities, and has played a key role in a sweeping change in conservation ideas and practice, particularly within formal biodiversity law and conservation policy arenas such as the CBD and IUCN, respectively. The Consortium has grown an increasingly influential and capable membership, as well as different partners at the global and national scales. It has attracted exceptional energy, being driven largely by voluntary or semi-voluntary labor and the commitment of its Members, and achieved a great deal with relatively limited financial resources.

The Consortium today stands at an inflection point in its evolution. It has achieved key early objectives related to gaining acceptance of ICCAs in formal global biodiversity law and conservation policies. It has played a key role in the growing embrace of community-based conservation models and practices, and links between conservation and social justice, on many fronts over the past two decades. As a result, the major challenge to ICCAs over the past decade has gradually shifted from acceptance and support at the international policy level to implementation and effective support at the national and sub-national levels. A key strategic challenge for the Consortium is therefore to design its work in ways that most effectively provide the Consortium's membership and other allies with tools, resources, and leverage that will support their efforts to secure and strengthen ICCAs into the future. A fundamental challenge for the Consortium is also to review its overall structure, governance, membership composition, and human and financial resourcing in order to enable it to fulfill its key functions effectively.

3.1 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

3.1.1 Strengths

- The Consortium is a vibrant and leading global network for promoting indigenous peoples' and community-driven conservation practices and paradigms. It is a champion of conservation strategies and practices based on local community and indigenous peoples' self-determination, common rights and responsibilities, culture, identity, values, institutions and livelihoods.
- The Consortium is a unique and increasingly influential voice in global biodiversity and conservation, particularly within the CBD and IUCN-- leaders of global policy in the field.
- A key source of technical knowledge, tools, and ideas for its Members and other advocates of ICCAs and community-driven conservation.
- A movement providing solidarity, inspiration, and peer learning to its Members and many other actors in the conservation arena.
- Exceptionally strong values, principles, and underlying motivation within Consortium leadership, secretariat and membership, which provide a strong basis for collective action. Extraordinary levels of personal commitment to the Consortium's cause by many

of the founders and leaders of the organization over the past two decades of its development.

- An influential membership – both organizational and individual (Honorary) Members – with an increasing suite of key national advocates and influencers attracted to the Consortium’s mission and cause.
- Strong and diverse membership base of CBOs and IPOs, with indigenous and community representatives increasingly active in the Consortium’s governance structure, activities and online discussions.
- Strong relationships with influential global partners such as the Global Environment Facility’s Small Grants Programme, IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme, CBD Secretariat and UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, which are expected to further expand and deepen through the ICCA Global Support Initiative.

3.1.2 Weaknesses

- Very high level of dependence on the personal commitment and investment by a small number of key founders, whose energy, relationships, and skills have largely driven the Consortium’s development to date. This is both a strength and weakness.
- Limited funding for core functions and significant dependence on a small number (2) of core major funders.
- Stretched organizational systems and limited administrative capacity for managing major funding and for allocating resources across competing priorities.
- Limited guidance and decision-making capacity of the Steering Committee around key strategic and resource allocation questions.
- Limited recognition or influence outside of the Consortium’s core established biodiversity and conservation circles (CBD and IUCN).
- Virtually no wider media presence, limited capacity for outreach and outward communications, and limited brand recognition.
- Influence and reach depends largely on the personal relationships of its leadership and some core Members.

3.1.3 Opportunities

- Global mainstream adoption and promotion of ICCAs in global biodiversity law and conservation policy.
- Increasing interest on the part of national governments to achieve conservation targets through improved recognition of and support for ICCAs.
- Growing scientific evidence acknowledging indigenous peoples’ and local communities’ significant contributions to conservation through a diverse range of local measures and institutions, and highlighting the importance of ICCAs to biodiversity, combating climate change, and supporting cultural and livelihood diversity.

- Possibilities for new collaborations with organisations that are not exclusively focused on conservation but find resonance the ICCA concept from other perspectives such as land rights or agrarian development.

3.1.4 Threats & Challenges to ICCAs

- The major challenge to ICCAs over the past 15 years has gradually shifted from acceptance and support at the international policy level to implementation and effective support at the national scale, where there is often pronounced institutional and political resistance to the kind of recognition of indigenous peoples' and community land and resource rights and self-determination upon which ICCAs are predicated. This implementation challenge is similar to that faced in other related arenas, such as indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination gained in the decade since the adoption of UNDRIP (2007) and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (2012).
- Despite growing support at some levels, ICCAs and their advocates continue to face enormous challenges from industrial activities, over-exploitation of resources, and pressure from powerful political and economic actors.
- Emergent global political trends herald a rollback of democratic and pluralistic institutions, civil society freedoms, and the rights of citizens. This is also tied to growing oppression, including harassment, persecution, and murder, of indigenous peoples' leaders and community activists around the world, as observed in recent years.
- Potential appropriation of indigenous and local conservation initiatives and movements by external interests and actors.

3.2 Risk Analysis

The major risks to the Consortium revolve around its two key resources: human resources (staff and leadership) and funding.

- The Consortium has grown rapidly in scope, membership, resourcing, ambition and impact. Despite this, it has remained a highly personalized organization, still dependent on the Global Coordinator and a handful of founding Steering Committee members. There is a major risk to the Consortium's work in the current level of dependence on one or a few people entering the latter stage of their careers.
- The Consortium's staffing strategy has focused on identifying motivated and talented individuals, enlisting their involvement in various capacities, and providing them a very limited amount of compensation. The result is that the Consortium's internal capacity depends on finding top talent willing and able to work in a semi-voluntary manner. The risk is that over the longer term, as the Consortium grows, this approach will limit the

Consortium's ability to grow an effective global team that provides equal opportunities for people from a range of backgrounds, to exercise growing administrative functions, and to achieve impact. The semi-voluntary employment approach can also lead to high rates of staff turnover and change, as well as lower motivation and accountability than in equivalent full-time paid positions.

- The Consortium faces a major risk in terms of its existing funding base's dependence on only two major core funders. Over the past 6 years, there has been little diversification of funding sources or investment in fundraising strategy.
- At the same time, managing rapid growth in a context of limited resources and growing demand for the Consortium's support from around the world poses inherent risks from managing an organizational transition and change while maintaining its core culture and values in the face of changes in leadership and resourcing.

4 Strategy

4.1 Vision & Mission

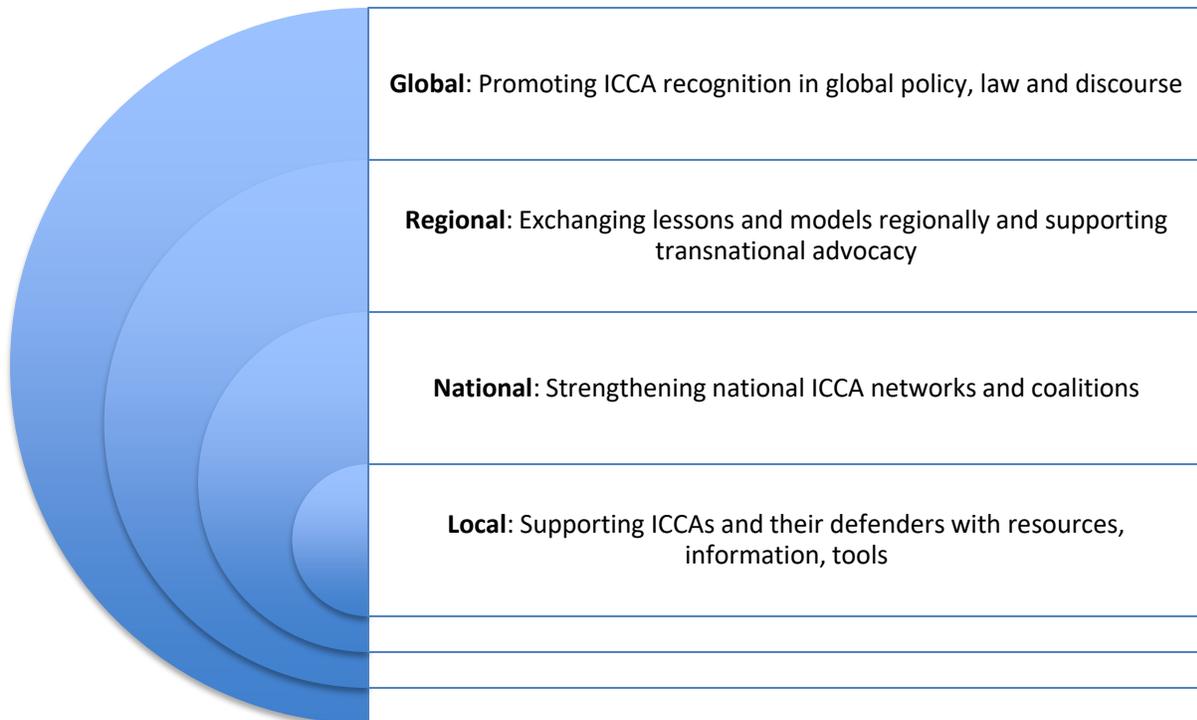
The Consortium's **mission** is to promote the appropriate recognition of, and support to, indigenous peoples' and community conserved territories and areas (ICCAs) at local, national and international levels.

The long-term **vision** of the Consortium is a world where ICCAs thrive and contribute to self-determination of indigenous peoples and local communities, conservation of biological and cultural diversity and wellness of all beings.

4.2 Working Across Scales

The Consortium's work operates at four basic scales:

- i) At the **local level**, the Consortium promotes self-awareness and self-strengthening of ICCAs and assists communities in resisting threats, carrying out assessments and plans, and obtaining the means to implement their plans. Members and national networks are the key actors carrying out this work.
- ii) At the **national level**, some Members and GSI-supported catalytic organizations have taken the lead in processes of networking, mutual learning, organization and mobilization for collective advocacy to improve relevant policies and practices. The Consortium supports such processes in diverse ways, promoting awareness and capacities and assisting technically for specific issues and tasks. National networks (including working groups, coalitions, associations and federations) are critical vehicles for promoting policy change and other actions at the national level.
- iii) At the **regional level**, the Consortium promotes learning exchanges across different countries, including representatives of organized indigenous peoples and local communities, relevant governmental agencies and supporting civil society organizations, and supports transnational advocacy efforts to help address threats to ICCAs and their custodians.
- iv) At the **global level**, the Consortium works to secure the appropriate recognition of ICCAs in international policy and law and related monitoring mechanisms, synthesize legal and policy analyses at the national and regional levels, and promote ICCAs within broader discourses on conservation, equity, sustainable livelihoods and human rights. It also identifies opportunities for mutual engagement and support between Members and strategic allies, including for transnational advocacy.



Four interconnected scales of the Consortium's activities from the local to the global level.

4.3 Strategic Directions

The Consortium has three basic overarching strategic directions that it uses to pursue its mission as foundations of its overall strategy (see Figure below). These are:

a) **Supporting Local, National and Transnational Action:**

Supporting and empowering local, national and transnational actors and networks to take collective action that advances and supports ICCAs at the national and local scales, including: (i) identifying and providing direct support to emblematic ICCAs; (ii) identifying and supporting national catalytic / strategic organizations to promote national networks and accompany the self-strengthening of ICCAs at the local level; (iii) analyzing the national context and identifying, promoting, enacting and implementing supportive laws, policies and programmes; and (iv) enhancing joint learning, exchanges and capacities at transnational level.

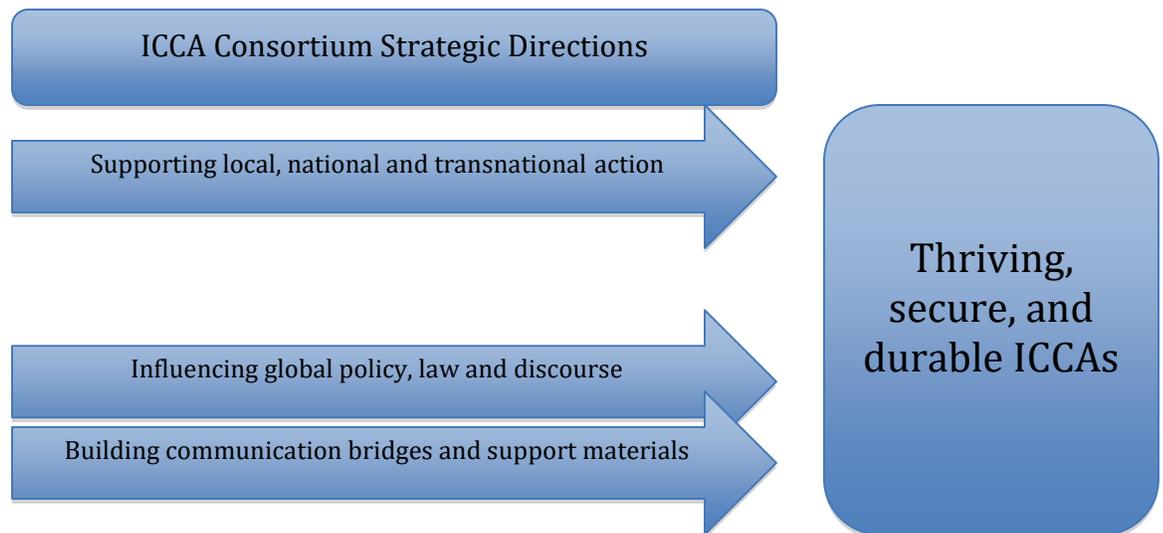
b) Influencing Global Policy, Law and Discourse:

Working to influence key global policy and legal frameworks and overall discourse on conservation, equity, sustainable livelihoods and human rights, in collaboration with strategic allies and partners and in ways that create an enabling environment for ICCAs at national and local scales.

c) Building Communication Bridges and Support Materials:

Producing information, tools, analyses, knowledge and other products, and facilitating learning and sharing opportunities that enhance ICCAs and their champions and supporters in civil society, academia and government agencies. .

This strategic plan proposes that the Consortium organizes its operational priorities and goals, and annual work plans developed at the global level and within regions through the new decentralized structure, according to these overarching strategies. Notably, all three strategies are interconnected and work across all four scales; particular attention will need to be paid to fostering communication, coordination and synergies between them. For example, legal, policy and advocacy actions should be coordinated across the national, transnational and international levels and involve various forms of communication and support materials.



This section describes the broad strategic focus of the Consortium and the rationale for its choices; more detailed targets are provided by annual implementation plans that create the framework for the Consortium’s work planning processes.

4.3.1 Supporting Local, National and Transnational Action

The critical challenge facing the recognition, strengthening, and survival of ICCAs around the world lies at the national level, and more precisely at the interface between self-determination, territorial/land rights and responsibilities and local conservation systems, on the one hand, and national legislation, policies and governance processes on the other. At the same time, there are growing opportunities at the national level for influencing conservation laws and policies, in ways that support ICCAs by drawing on the supportive global legal and policy provisions influenced by the Consortium.

For the ICCA Consortium to fulfill its mission, it must focus its resources on enabling its Members and other allies and stakeholders to work effectively at the national level to enable and support ICCAs. The key strategic direction of work for the Consortium at the national scale is to **support the development and strengthening of effective and influential national and transnational networks that facilitate and support ICCAs on the ground**. This is key to enabling the translation of innovative global conservation legislation and policies to the national and local levels and to advocating for further legal and policy change.

The central purpose of supporting national networks in particular is to enable them to influence and support ICCA recognition in their own countries, through their own **strategies and plans that are customized for a given national socio-economic, legal, and political context**. The Consortium has played a key role in building these networks (e.g., working groups, coalitions, federations) in many countries, which have developed into key forums for national action and collaboration that influence national policies and support ICCAs at the local level. The Consortium will prioritize supporting the development of these national networks, by working with key Members and national Focal Point organizations, identifying strategic opportunities for national policy change and implementation, and ensuring that the Consortium secretariat (Regional Coordinators) prioritize supporting and facilitating national network development according to Members' needs. The Consortium will prioritize developing a consistent and systematic approach to supporting national network development, drawing on key experiences such as in the Philippines, Madagascar, Iran and Colombia, to develop an adaptable process or methodology for network facilitation.

More broadly, the Consortium will support the convening of regional networks for learning and peer exchange, based on the convening of existing national networks. It will also assist Members with transnational advocacy, in collaboration with other social movements and civil society organizations with relevant capacities, especially to help address situations in which ICCAs are under threat from externally imposed activities. Importantly, such support must be defined and directed by the affected Members and ICCA custodians themselves, and should be complemented by relevant communications materials and legal and policy support.

4.3.2 Influencing Global Policy, Law and Discourse

Since its creation, a major focus of the Consortium has been to influence global biodiversity law and conservation policy (particularly under the CBD and IUCN) in ways that generate support

for ICCAs and their advocates. Engagement in these policy arenas has been a critical function and role of the Consortium, and increases support for ICCAs in the following tangible ways:

- Global policies and laws that recognize and support ICCAs as a strategy to achieve and further conservation goals create **political legitimacy for ICCAs**. This can be used to generate political space for reforms that support ICCAs at the national scale.
- Global policies and laws that support ICCAs such as those of the CBD can create windows for **greater resourcing of ICCAs** and their advocates. For example, conservation funding from development agencies and financing mechanisms may be tied to the CBD Aichi Targets. Advocating the importance of recognizing and supporting ICCAs in order to reach or exceed the Aichi Targets may be an important strategy to generate funding and other resources to support ICCAs and their advocates on the ground.

A strategic priority for the Consortium is to continue working in the two main policy arenas where it is established and influential: the CBD and IUCN. It will do so in order to further consolidate its standing and to develop new means for influencing global biodiversity law and conservation policy. Given the binding nature of the CBD, particular emphasis will be placed on promoting the adoption of new and implementation of existing decisions, recommendations and mechanisms (including for resourcing, monitoring and compliance) that support ICCAs in the CBD framework, at both the international and national levels. This will focus on:

- (i) **Improving monitoring and assessment of how (sub-)national governments are implementing existing supportive CBD decisions (and IUCN resolutions and recommendations) related to ICCAs**, in order to help hold them accountable to their international commitments;
- (ii) **Producing technical guidance on recognizing and supporting ICCAs**, as requested by Parties to the CBD, and disseminating this information to CBD National Focal Points and CBD meetings; and
- (iii) **Actively promoting an ambitious target related to ICCAs in (and contributing to the broader development of) the CBD's post-2020 framework for biodiversity**, including through position papers, written submissions, oral statements, engagement with CBD National Focal Points and side events at CBD meetings from 2017-2020. Such work needs to be clearly integrated with the Consortium's other key strategies related to national and transnational action and communications.

A second strategy for supporting ICCAs through global engagement lies at the interface of social justice, conservation, and human rights. There are a number of ongoing initiatives, some involving Consortium Members, to improve monitoring and compliance of conservation actors with international human rights law and standards (including those concerning indigenous peoples and non-indigenous communities). These present tangible opportunities to develop legal and policy measures that can help empower ICCAs and their advocates and defenders against conservation injustices such as forced evictions from new and expanded protected areas, militarization of protected areas overlapping with traditional territories, and imposition of unwanted designations for protected and conserved areas. The Consortium will work with its Members and strategic allies such as UN Special Rapporteurs to support concrete measures and

mechanisms at the international and national levels to help improve conservation actors' accountability and compliance with international human rights law and standards. The Consortium will also distill and synthesize experiences of its Members with inappropriate forms of recognition and support for ICCAs as 'softer' forms of conservation injustice, in order to further develop its own technical guidance on appropriate recognition and support in diverse contexts.

Third, a key strategic question for the Consortium has been how to engage in wider policy arenas relevant to ICCAs such as those on sustainable development, climate change, food security/ sovereignty, and business and human rights, given current limitations in its own capacity, lack of track record and standing in these arenas, and ability to influence key changes or policy outcomes in more complicated processes such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Framework Convention on Climate Change. From 2017-2018, the Consortium's short-term strategy will focus on: (i) supporting key Members to engage in these arenas and participating as the Consortium where opportunities arise; (ii) producing technical analyses and other communication materials on the relevance of these processes for ICCAs (and vice versa); and (iii) identifying strategic partnerships and opportunities (as well as risks) for engaging in such processes. This includes supporting Members to: (i) **participate in multilateral fora and mechanisms concerning indigenous peoples' rights and human rights** in general (e.g., UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Special Rapporteurs, Universal Periodic Review); (ii) **highlight common rights and responsibilities to land, water and natural resources** (e.g., events of the International Land Coalition and Rights and Resources Initiative); (iii) **examine the conditions for food and water sovereignty (e.g., through FAO and the negotiations towards a declaration on the rights of peasants and other rural workers)**; (iv) assess the contributions of ICCAs to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to culturally appropriate sustainable development; and (v) **advocate for relevant safeguards and remedies in financial mechanisms (such as the Global Environment Facility) and in business and human rights frameworks**. In doing so, the Consortium will be able to assess the benefits, risks, and opportunities for engaging in these broader policy processes and to take a more informed decision about strategic directions by early 2019.

Influencing global discourses on conservation, equity, sustainable livelihoods and human rights will require addressing the Consortium's weaknesses (see 3.1.2) with limited recognition outside of biodiversity and conservation circles, limited media presence and brand recognition, and dependence on personal relationships of its founders and certain core Members. Clearly, the Consortium's positions within policy processes will gain more traction if it has an active presence and role in broad discourse about diverse international issues.

Since its inception, the Consortium and its Members have participated in a range of events and activities (such as conferences, workshops, special issues of journals, and academic discussion groups) outside of formal policy processes. In addition to ad hoc opportunities, a coordinated approach should be taken to target events and 'communities of practice' that are known to influence discourses on conservation, equity, sustainable livelihoods and human rights, including through conference presentations, public lectures, published articles, and

engagement with mainstream and social media. Consortium Members with multimedia skills and academic affiliations should be more actively engaged in such efforts, particularly to assist CBO and IPO Members to document and share their own experiences. Particular emphasis should be placed on **elevating the status of customary law** in relation to laws of state governments in such discourses, acknowledging the inherent flaws and injustices in the current system of international and national law. **Equitable research partnerships with action-oriented universities and institutes** could also be pursued, where appropriate, on the basis of clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

All of this work will be backed up by **high quality technical research and communications materials such as position papers and policy briefs**, summaries of policy processes and outcomes for Consortium Members, and **articles in peer-reviewed journal and mainstream media**. It will engage strategic allies (such as regional indigenous peoples' networks, global social movements and action-oriented institutes) in order to further deepen and expand the influence of the Consortium's positions, particularly in policy processes outside of biodiversity and conservation. This strategic direction of work will include assisting with overall coordination and synthesis of policy, legal and advocacy efforts at the national and transnational levels.

4.3.3 Building Communication Bridges & Support Materials

A key function of the Consortium and service to its Members is as the generator, collector, and repository of a vast array of technical tools, knowledge, and resources about ICCAs. The production, compilation, and dissemination of these information and communications resources is a main strategy for supporting national networks and other ICCA advocates at all levels. Technical resources and analyses, for example, can be used by national networks and Members to work with government to design policy reforms that support ICCAs.

The core of the Consortium's communications strategy – which will be more fully developed and elaborated as a near-term implementation priority – is to bridge and foster the interchange of information between the local, national and global scales, working closely with its Members and national networks and coalitions that are supporting ICCAs. Above all, the Consortium's focus is to amplify the voices of its Members and ICCA custodians to influence discourses and decision-making processes that affect them; and to synthesize and distill relevant policies and developments so that Members and local communities can access, understand and use them. The Consortium will continue to play a key role in identifying ICCAs as a continuum of cases, enabling ICCA custodians to share their own stories and challenges, documenting ICCAs, distilling their achievements and impacts, translating those for global audiences and relevant decision-makers and making sure that peer-support and peer-review mechanisms are in operation at local, national and international levels.

In order to do this, the Consortium will make **significant investments in its communication strategy, skills, technologies and partnerships**. The Consortium will greatly improve the accessibility of the enormous array of information, analyses, stories, images, and data that it currently holds and has made accessible to its Members... but is still largely unknown to them.

The Consortium will invest in the tools and relationships with media outlets, filmmakers, designers and other specialists that will enable it to communicate fluidly across a great diversity of audiences, cultures, and languages. The Consortium will become the leading network for enabling ICCA custodians to tell their stories, showcase their impacts, and influence global conservation discourse and relevant law and policy. This requires a complete overhaul of the Consortium's communications capacity as an urgent priority to implement this strategy, and a commensurate investment of resources to achieve this.

4.4 Strengthening the Consortium: Strategies for Organisational Growth

A key part of the next phase of the Consortium's development and growth will be a series of major changes in how the Consortium is structured, staffed, and resourced. The Consortium is at a point in its development where the structures and resourcing that have sustained it thus far will no longer be sufficient to enable the Consortium to: a) become a stronger and more effective global network; b) survive major transitions in staffing from the founding generation to a new generation of leadership; and c) ensure that major risks related to funding and overall resourcing are addressed. For the Consortium to address these organizational challenges and build a stronger network that can sustain its work and impact, much greater attention needs to be given to these key elements of organizational capacity. Together, these are a key component of this strategic plan.

4.4.1 Organisational Structure

As the Consortium has grown over the past several years, it has increased its volume of work, membership, collaborations and partnerships, and overall scope of work. The number of national-level networks and working groups, facilitating important national movements to secure and strengthen ICCAs, has grown rapidly. More Regional Coordinators have been recruited to work on a semi-voluntary basis to support work at regional and national scales. The ICCA Global Support Initiative (GSI) has provided significant funding to UNDP GEF SGP to work with the Consortium and other partners to support ICCA work at multiple scales.

In order to sustain this growing body of work, take advantage of growing opportunities, and build the pool of human and financial resources that will be needed to deliver, the Consortium's structure is at a point where it must evolve. The key shift called for in this strategic plan is towards **regional decentralization**. This will involve strengthening planning, fundraising, management, and implementation at the regional level, led by Regional Coordinators working with national and regional Members, including 'national focal points', which are member organisations that take the lead on work in key countries where the Consortium is actively supporting national networks and action plans.

This process will give the Members and Honorary members greater ownership over the Consortium's work, particularly in terms of action plans at national and regional scale, and will ensure that work is responsive to local and national needs and context. It will also place the

Regional Coordinators in a clearer position of accountability towards the membership, and clearer responsibility for working to mobilize resources for work at the regional and national scales. (Funds will still need to be raised for the Global Secretariat and internationally focused work.)

Table 1: Roles and functions of four key levels of the Consortium’s operating structure.

Entity	Role
Global Secretariat	Lead on global policy engagement, communications and coordination, including synthesizing and distilling work across all regions and identifying opportunities for learning, exchange, strategic partnerships and advocacy; oversee overall strategy and management of the Consortium, including fundraising and human resources.
Regional Coordinators	Lead on support and facilitation of national networks, including supporting national focal points; develop and manage implementation of regional strategies and work plans, based on national action plans developed with national focal points; assist regional Members with transnational advocacy efforts; contribute to communications and identification of priorities for international advocacy and policy engagement. Fundraise for regional and transnational work.
National Focal Points (i.e., Member organizations operating at the national level)	Lead facilitation of national networks or working groups; assist national members with transnational advocacy efforts; contribute to communications and identification of priorities for international advocacy and policy engagement. Fundraise for national level work.
Members	Work with national Focal Point Organizations to develop strategies at national level. Participate actively in the work of national networks and regional and international activities. Contribute to communications and identification of priorities for advocacy and policy engagement. Assist National Focal Points in mobilizing resources.

The regionalisation process will be phased-in during 2017-2018, with any requisite enabling changes to the Consortium’s Statutes and Operational Procedures identified and adopted by the end of 2018. The design of new structures and its implementation processes will be a priority over these two years aiming at being in-place and working by 2019.

4.4.2 Membership and Partnerships

The Consortium has been growing rapidly as it becomes more prominent, increasingly becoming established as the central network for indigenous and community conservation work and interests. If the Consortium's communications proficiency and influence at global and national scales increases as envisioned in this strategic plan, there will be further demand for membership from organizations and communities around the world.

The decentralization process described above is a critical component of managing for an increasing membership as well as Member demand and engagement. The Consortium will simply no longer be able to function as a personalized network where the expectation is that key decisions are made through an annual General Assembly; the Consortium may have already outgrown this format at present. Rather, key decisions and plans will increasingly need to be undertaken and resourced at the national and regional levels as the key loci of direct engagement. This will also improve Members' ownership of processes, and thereby engagement and mobilization in the Consortium's overall work.

At the same time, there is a need for a more defined membership policy that articulates the expectations of Members and criteria for membership selection. This needs to consider questions of composition, representation, and regional balance across the membership.

In addition to membership considerations, the Consortium also needs to place more emphasis on developing effective partnerships and alliances to advance each of its three overarching strategies. Partnerships with GEF-SGP, IUCN's Global Protected Areas Programme, UNEP-WCMC and the CBD Secretariat have proven highly beneficial to date for its work in the CBD and IUCN. However, as an association, the Consortium has generally not engaged with broader social movements or networks beyond these two fora, though some Members and Honorary Members are involved in such groups in their own capacities. Particularly as the Consortium seeks to expand and deepen its involvement in policy arenas beyond the CBD and IUCN, strategic partnerships will be necessary to tackle certain issues that are currently outside of its core areas of expertise. This could include, for example, building partnerships and alliances with organizations working to support environmental and human rights defenders, social movements for food sovereignty, and civil society coalitions involved in UN human rights processes. The Consortium would benefit from leveraging existing relationships of its Members with such groups, and becoming more actively involved as an association in joint efforts such as publications, communications and advocacy. This would increase the Consortium's reach and influence with 'new' audiences and issues and enable it to better serve its membership without having to acquire the capacity to address all Members' requests itself.

4.4.3 Human Resources

To date, the Consortium has largely relied on the extraordinary energy and leadership of a largely voluntary or semi-voluntary labor force, including its Global Coordinator and other key founding members, and most of the Regional Coordinators. More structured formal employment has been phased in as resources have become available in recent years, but the Consortium presently lacks sufficient human resource capacity – both in terms of key roles and

skills such as **fundraising** and **communications**, and in terms of the **viability and security of the employment conditions for Regional Coordinators and most of the Global Secretariat**.

The Consortium is at a point in its development where it needs to strengthen its human resourcing at all scales, while still retaining the important ethics of commitment and self-motivation that have comprised a key part of its core culture to date. This is a critical step in developing an organization that can be sustained beyond the founding generation of leadership.

Key gaps and human resourcing issues that will be addressed as strategic priorities are:

- The **Global Coordinator** is the key executive charged with leading and managing the organization in an operational sense. Succession planning for the Global Coordinator is, at present, an urgent HR need for the Consortium and a major strategic risk for the organization. A clear and phased transition plan needs to be developed, including changing constitutional provisions that define the Global Coordinator as a volunteer and member of the Steering Committee. A clear distinction should be made between the Global Coordinator (the lead technical position in the Secretariat) and the Secretary (a voluntary position that is part of the Steering Committee, as per the Statutes). The Global Coordinator should be more clearly defined as an employee of the Steering Committee and the lead executive officer of the Global Secretariat, and accountable to the Steering Committee and the membership for implementing the Consortium's strategy. The Secretary role should include responsibility for convening and facilitating the General Assembly and meetings of the Steering Committee and preparing and circulating the minutes for both.
- As the scope of the Consortium's work and resources grows as envisioned under this strategy, it will be important to consider dividing the current work load of the Global Coordinator into at least two components as follows:
 - The core networking, partnership development, and global leadership functions of the Global Coordinator, as well as overseeing fundraising and being the lead voice of the Consortium.
 - More managerial functions including the oversight of programme execution and management, which could be taken on by a **Programme Manager**.
- Beyond the Global Coordinator, key gaps at the Secretariat level relate to **communications** and **fundraising**. The Consortium will need to upgrade its capacity to deliver cutting-edge communications systems and platforms that can bridge its diverse audiences at different levels, as well as better communicating the Consortium's work and achievements to funders, Members, and other audiences. Fundraising is another important capacity gap in terms of having dedicated part-time or full-time staff that can help build and diversify the resourcing of the Consortium, which will be needed to pay for some of the changes in the Consortium's human resourcing.
- In addition to the International Policy Coordinator role, further HR support is needed for the **legal, policy and discourse** strategic area. This could be partly addressed through

more active engagement with Members with relevant expertise, though in the longer-term, a well-coordinated group of lawyers and legal practitioners working closely with the national and regional networks is highly desirable. Investments should be made now to build a community of practice (for example, through scholarships and internships for young in-country lawyers and indigenous/community advocates, research partnerships with aligned institutes, technical training opportunities, etc.).

- **Regional Coordinators:** While there is a strong network of coordinators, in some regions there has been considerable turnover and the model functions better in others. The Regional Coordinator roles have been part-time and semi-voluntary. For the Consortium to interact with Members and support national-level work, the Regional Coordinator role is critical but highly under-resourced at present. The Consortium will move towards professionalizing the Regional Coordinator role, by providing clear terms of reference within a decentralized structure that enables and encourages the Coordinators to do more to mobilize resources and develop strategies with regional Members. The role should be full-time and compensated and budgeted for accordingly.

4.4.4 Funding

It is difficult to consider the future strategy and mission of the Consortium without concluding that the Consortium is severely under-resourced. The Consortium is predominantly dependent on only two funders for its core costs.³ The Consortium's fundraising approach has prioritized providing funding for local and national scale work and Members, while limiting to a minimum investments in the Global Secretariat or other central functions. This has helped catalyze the overall ICCA movement, but it leaves the Consortium itself extremely vulnerable to changes that might occur within its core funders, and to its own internal human resource changes and transitions.

To do more work, build and strengthen its human resourcing, take advantage of existing opportunities, and position itself for a future leadership succession, the Consortium will need to invest substantially more in human resources. This will require more funding and a larger budget, which will in turn require a more dedicated and intensive approach to fundraising at all scales. Key strategies that will be developed for fundraising include:

- Investing in dedicated full or part-time staff for fundraising and development functions.
- Devoting a greater share of the Global Coordinator's time for fundraising and partnerships development, partially enabled by decentralizing more of the operational work of the Consortium to the regional and national levels as described herein.
- Increasing and diversifying core operating support from private foundations and philanthropists, where there is significant opportunity amongst funders interested in the

³ A number of other funders have supported specific projects and initiatives.

intersection of conservation, social justice, indigenous rights, and community empowerment, and pursuing 'new' forms of fundraising such as crowd-funding for individual community actions. Capitalizing on these opportunities will require significant improvements in how the Consortium communicates about its work, goals, and achievements.

- Pursuing collaborations with other aligned organizations and institutes, global and regional networks and social movements that elicit funding opportunities while minimizing administrative costs (i.e. avoiding direct grant management).

4.4.5 Governance

The Consortium's Steering Committee provides a key function of providing legitimacy to the Consortium and ensuring it stays connected to its core constituents. This legitimacy and representativeness has been a key feature of the Consortium's composition and vitality. However, the Steering Committee has faced some challenges in terms of fulfilling conventional board functions around decision-making, strategic guidance, oversight, and fundraising.

The Steering Committee needs to continue to provide strong network linkages and representativeness, while becoming more effective at providing guidance, making key decisions, and holding the Global Secretariat accountable for delivery on this strategic plan and individual ToRs. A priority for the Consortium is strengthening the Steering Committee's ability to deliver sound overarching governance and leadership. Key elements of the strategy for doing this are:

- Ensuring at least **one in-person Steering Committee meeting is held annually** (wherever possible, back-to-back with other events) as well as regular quarterly remote meetings. Given present funding constraints, it does not have to be meeting of the entire Steering Committee, but could be a meeting of a sub-committee / commission.
- Reviewing decision-making structures within the Steering Committee, including establishing an **Executive Committee** that can provide more regular oversight and guidance in light of the nature of the large, growing, and geographically dispersed global Steering Committee.
- Exploring the possibility of splitting the Steering Committee into a **Global Council** that provides links to Members and constituents around the world, while providing **high-level guidance**, and a smaller and more operational Steering Committee that provides more conventional board governance functions. The latter could take on the tasks described above for the 'Executive' Committee.

5 Implementation Plan

The Strategic Plan will be implemented through annual goals, targets, and priority outcomes that will be developed at the multiple levels of the Consortium's operations. The annual planning cycle will include: (a) a review of progress against annual priorities and goals; (b) suggested goals and priorities for the following year; and (c) suggested changes and revisions to the present Strategic Plan.

Implementation priorities for 2017-2020 will be developed and integrated into the Consortium's existing 2017-2018 work plans. In the sections below, **on-going commitments** under current plans and grants (e.g. the GSI) are represented in italics alongside proposed plans (in regular font).

5.1 Strategic directions

5.1.1 Supporting Local, National and Transnational Action

- Support the *self-strengthening and (as desired) visibility of emblematic ICCAs at the local level in 26 countries.*
- Assist UNDP GEF-SGP in providing *small grants and other forms of support to ICCAs in 26 countries.*
- Collaborate with the IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme in delivering *assessments of the national governance context for protected areas and ICCAs in six countries.*
- Support the GSI to *assess conservation and sustainable livelihoods results and governance vitality in supported ICCAs.*
- Collaborate with UNEP-WCMC on a quality review of the existing ICCA entries in the ICCA Registry and WDPA and the inclusion of at least 30 new ICCA entries by the end of 2018.
- Carry out a review of the current status of **national ICCA networks** (including working groups, coalitions, associations and federations) in a selection of countries, ideally as a component of mapping and situational reviews under the GSI. This will help identify ICCA and national Members' needs and opportunities for stronger national networks to provide each other with peer-support and peer review (including for international ICCA listing) and catalyze appropriate ICCA-relevant reforms at the national level.
- *Promote and strengthen advocacy in about 40 countries, including through critical mass in national ICCA networks.*
- Test and enrich a guidance document for "**ICCA self-strengthening**", stressing the role of national ICCA networks, with steps and best practices drawing on the existing cases and examples.
- *Organise and support ICCA capacity development initiatives at the regional level, for example, through learning exchanges, as in Asia where there are opportunities for the creation of a regional ICCA Network.*

- Develop plans for **transnational advocacy efforts** to support a select number of ICCAs facing threats, in close collaboration with the SAFE initiative, the International Policy Coordinator and the Steering Committee member with special responsibility for legal issues.
- By the end of 2018, Regional Coordinators and National Focal Points will develop initial **National Action Plans** with national ICCA networks, Members, and ICCA custodian communities, as a basis for developing priorities for national action and future support.

5.1.2 Influencing Global Policy, Law & Discourse

- Develop an action plan for taking forward the decisions of the 13th Conference of the Parties to the CBD, particularly those calling for **best practice guidance for ICCAs**, the new Aichi Target indicators that specifically refer to the ICCA Consortium, and the draft methodological guidance on assessing the **contributions of indigenous peoples' and local communities' collective actions** to the CBD and Aichi Targets. This should be the focus of work around implementing the CBD up to 2020.
- Develop an initial strategy for targets that the Consortium should adopt for the **post-2020 CBD agenda**, including the potential for ambitious post-Aichi targets related to ICCAs and SDGs.
- Work with key UN allies and global organizations, including Consortium Members, to design relevant measures and mechanisms to ensure the **accountability and compliance of conservation actors** with international human rights law and standards.
- Carry out an actor mapping of Consortium Member priorities and expertise in relation to **other global policy processes affecting ICCAs** (such as sustainable development, climate change, agriculture, and business and human rights) to better understand existing linkages and engagements.
- *Pursue **global policy leadership and impact** – including by supporting Members to participate – in international policy arenas relevant for conservation, indigenous peoples' rights, human rights, climate change, food security and sovereignty and SDGs.*
- *Pursue a renewed **ICCA Alert mechanism** and partnership with Friends of the Earth International about the Solidarity Action and Fund for Defenders of the Commons and ICCAs (SAFE).*
- Work to develop a Consortium strategy on addressing **mining and extractive industries** in relation to ICCAs.

5.1.3 Building Communication Bridges & Support Materials

- *Pursue research and **technical advances on ICCAs** (self-strengthening methodology, governance vitality, historical regional analyses with Policy Briefs on the model of Policy Brief no. 3 for more regions).*
- *Continue documenting coverage, characteristics and values of ICCAs in history reports and the series of **Consortium Policy Briefs**.*

- *Review and revamp the global **ICCA communication strategy** (including proper launching of the new Web Site and at least one major video describing ICCAs).*
- Develop a clear **communications plan** to implement the priorities in this strategic plan, in order to better ensure the effective flow of information between global and local scales, in service of key Member interests and needs, and to better showcase the contribution of ICCAs to global conservation and other arenas.

5.2 Organizational Growth

5.2.1 Organizational Structure

- The **regionalization process** will be further defined, with clear ToRs for Regional Coordinators and National Focal Points established, and revised decentralized planning processes initiated.
- Regional Coordinators will take the initiative to **define regional priorities**, outline strategies, and identify options for resource mobilization to pursue those priorities.
- Any changes necessary in the Consortium's **Statutes** and **Operational Guidelines** will be clearly identified during the decentralization process planning and tabled at the 2017 GA and again at the 2018 GA.

5.2.2 Membership and Partnerships

- *Develop and adopt a more refined **membership policy** that considers questions such as composition, representation, regional balance and selection criteria.*
- *Continue the careful expansion of membership to **Members** well above one hundred and twenty by end of 2018 and **Honorary Members** well above three hundred, with good regional distribution.*
- Identify: (i) social movements and networks in the policy arenas in which the Consortium seeks to expand its influence; (ii) existing involvement of Members and Honorary Members in such groups; and (iii) opportunities for the Consortium to develop **partnerships** to further its three overarching strategies.

5.2.3 Human Resources

- The Steering Committee and the Global Secretariat will develop a **leadership transition plan** for the Consortium – including identifying and supporting individuals willing and able to take on core positions such as President, Secretary and Global Coordinator by the end of 2019 – that can be tabled for review and approval by the end of 2017.
- Recruit a **communications specialist** and explore options for recruiting at least part-time **fundraising expertise** within the Secretariat.
- Develop or revise clear **ToRs** to define the roles of all members of the Secretariat.

5.2.4 Funding

- Develop a basic **fundraising strategy** identifying renewed and new opportunities and prioritizing actions for diversifying funding streams through various sources, including but not limited to philanthropic foundations. Pursue at least five new sources of core and programmatic funding, aiming for a substantial increase of the total budget available for operations beyond 2018.
- The Regional Coordinators and national focal points will, as part of their duties and strategies, identify funding opportunities that can support Consortium work at regional and national scales.

5.2.5 Governance

- Review and develop a plan for reforming basic **governance** structures, including the ToR of the Steering Committee and the role for an Elders Council that would play a broad strategic advisory role. An internal division of responsibilities in the Steering Committee should enable it to ensure geographic representation but also play a clear governance function. Prepare revisions to the Consortium's Statutes and Operational Guidelines accordingly.