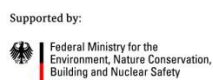# Self-Strengthening ICCAs –
## Guidance on a process and resources for custodian indigenous peoples and local communities



## The ICCA Consortium

**Version March 14, 2017**

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Cover Photo: Members of the Ikalahan Community of Imugan, Santa Fe, Nueva Vizacaya (Northern Luzon, Philippines). Courtesy of Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend, 2012.

Available from:  The ICCA Consortium at www.iccaconsortium.org or info@iccaconsortium.org

# Introduction and summary

This document aims to support effective **self-strengthening processes** (SSPs) for territories or areas conserved by indigenous peoples or local communities– abbreviated as 'ICCAs'.  Through an SPP, a **custodian indigenous people or local community** (hereafter referred to as 'community') defines and controls a course of action to become, as relevant:

- more **self-aware and knowledgeable** about its ICCA and its importance/significance
- more appreciative of its **history, culture and governance institutions**
- better able to **govern and manage** its ICCA with **integrity and vision**
- better **connected with other communities** and other dependable **friends and allies** in civil society, government, etc.
- **better recognised, respected and appropriately supported** locally, nationally and beyond
- **wiser**, **more responsible** and more capable of providing **positive responses to ICCA opportunities and threats, learning from experience, innovating** and **preventing** and **solving problems**

The same process is expected to advance **territories** that:

- are **better conserved,** e.g., protected, sustainably used and/or restored
- have higher **ecological integrity and resilience**
- provide better support for the custodian community's **livelihoods and material and non-material well-being**

Finally, and importantly, an SSP is expected to **enhance the connection between a custodian community and its territory.**

Throughout history, custodian communities have done all they can to strengthen themselves and care for the territories that underpin their livelihoods and identity. Their on-going self-strengthening efforts are, and have long been, part of the flow of normal life, naturally shaping socio-cultural, economic and diplomatic approaches to the betterment of each community and its environment.

Today, custodian communities and their ICCAs face unprecedented stresses and threats arising from socio-ecological changes sweeping the world. Concerns for the conservation of nature coincide with concerns for the conservation of the cultural diversity, knowledge and wisdom still found (albeit increasingly diminishing) in human communities living close to nature. In response, a few international organizations and donors have joined hands to support custodian communities in their efforts to strengthen their capacity to govern and manage their conserved territories. The **ICCA Global Support Initiative (GSI)** is an example of such efforts, and this document, prepared by the ICCA Consortium on the basis of lessons learned in its work and the work of its Members over the past twenty years, is one of its outputs.

This document offers:
- an **introduction** to ICCAs and the threats and opportunities they face
- a flexible **road map for ICCA custodian communities** to define and pursue the vision they have for themselves and their  conserved territories
- **guidance for national GSI strategic/ catalytic organizations** to accompany communities in their processes, following the Terms of Reference provided to them by UNDP GEF SGP

**Just as each context and community is unique, each SSP is also unique**. Moreover, terms and concepts take meaning from the contexts in which they are used… and indigenous peoples, local communities and "ICCAs" exist in extremely diverse circumstances.  This is why, while this document offers ideas, resources and tools that will hopefully be useful for all who wish to consider them, the ICCA Consortium recognizes that nothing here may have universal value. Terms and concepts meaningful for some may raise concern for others. We aim to offer a broad and flexible approach, but we are clear that this approach needs to be evaluated and revised in context.  We offer apologies in advance to anyone who may take offense at any particular point or suggestion.

The draft SSP guidance is organized in seven Modules:

1. Enhancing ICCA awareness and planning a self-strengthening process (SSP)
2. Describing and documenting the ICCA
3. Assessing and analyzing ICCA security and resilience
4. Developing ICCA initiatives/ project proposals
5. Self-monitoring for continued learning and strengthening
6. Communicating about the ICCA
**7.** Networking and advocating for appropriate ICCA recognition and support

All Modules deal with elements of 'self-strengthening' and can be ordered and combined as seen fit by the custodian community.  Our aim is to provide essential information in a concise way, to be used as a stimulus rather than a blueprint.

Each Module offers key questions to explore, a basic description of objectives and processes, a description of key concepts and terms, and hyper-links to resources and tools available from the Internet.

While specific approaches will vary, the SSP is grounded in **'grassroots discussions'** – **the core 'self-strengthening' activity.**  These are a series of internal dialogues, reflections and analyses organized in ways that are consistent with the normal social and cultural life of the community. Grassroots discussions can, for instance, take place within existing culture-based institutions, such as general assemblies, councils of elders, natural groupings and associations.

Most Modules focus on processes that can be initiated and carried through by a single custodian community. Module 7, however, is dedicated to seeking appropriate recognition and support for ICCAs at national and international levels, which typically cannot be achieved by any single community. It may still start from one community's grassroots discussions, but it soon requires interaction, networking and organizing among several communities and other partners. In this sense, Module 7 is about **mutual strengthening for a common purpose in broader society**.

We encourage ICCA custodian communities to engage in a self-strengthening process, such as the one described in this guidance document. This is particularly important for communities expecting to receive, or having already received, a GSI grant from the GEF SGP. The SSP outlined here can strengthen the ICCA and its custodian community, including through ongoing self-monitoring — an essential aspect of implementing a GSI grant.

As the lessons and experiences are very much on-going, this document is **a work in progress** and the ICCA Consortium is committed to improving it on the basis of inputs and advice received. We encourage all users and concerned practitioners to actively contribute to its further development, including by sending any comments to info@iccaconsortium.org, noting "SSP Road Map" in the subject line.

*Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend and Jessica Campese, 14 March 2017*

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# Acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| CBD | Convention on Biological Diversity |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| FPIC | Free, prior and informed consent |
| GEF | Global Environmental Facility |
| GPAP | Global Programme on Protected Areas (of the IUCN) |
| GSI | Global support initiative |
| ICCA | Territory or area conserved by an indigenous people or a local community |
| IPs | Indigenous peoples |
| IUCN | International Union for the Conservation of Nature |
| LCs | Local communities |
| NBSAP | National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| RS | Resilience and security |
| SGP | Small Grants Programme |
| SSP | Self-strengthening process |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNDRIP | United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| WCMC | World Conservation Monitoring Centre |
| WCPA | World Commission on Protected Areas (of the IUCN) |
| WDPA | World Database on Protected Areas |

# Part I: Supporting Custodians in Strengthening their ICCAs

## *ICCAs*

Since the beginning of the new millennium, the general term 'ICCAs' has emerged[1] to refer to an age-old, widespread, and diverse phenomenon— **territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities**.  Well-defined ICCAs exist where: [2]

1. There is a **close and deep connection** between a territory, area or species' habitat and an indigenous people or local community. This relationship may be rooted in history, social and cultural identity, spirituality and/or people's reliance on the area for their material and/or non-material wellbeing.

2. The custodian people or community makes and enforces decisions about the territory, area, or species' habitat through a **functioning governance institution.**

3. The governance decisions and management efforts of the concerned people or community contribute to **conservation of nature** (ecosystems, habitats, species, etc.), as well as to their own **wellbeing**.

Communities across diverse contexts and regions have demonstrated these **three key characteristics** and have voiced their importance, calling for them to be maintained and strengthened.[3]  Notably, such characteristics may or may not be recognized in statutory law.  Further, conservation is rarely an explicit or named management objective for the concerned community.  More frequently it is a result of other objectives, such as the protection of a spiritually or culturally significant area, security of the natural resources needed for livelihoods, or others.

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### What do we mean by…?

For this document, the following general terms are used:

- '**Community**' refers to an indigenous people or a local community, sedentary or mobile, as relevant to the specific case. We use the singular term throughout, but recognise that multiple custodian communities may care for the same conserved territory and bio-cultural diversity.[4]

- '**Territory**' refers to territories, areas or species' habitats and encompasses terrestrial, coastal or marine areas and their bio-cultural diversity.

- '**Conservation**' refers to a positive interaction between people and their environment that leads to the *preservation*, *sustainable use*, *restoration* and/or *local enrichment* of nature.[5]

When supporting local processes, **please use the terms and language communities use themselves.**

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**'ICCA' is an abbreviation for a phenomenon that has many diverse manifestations and names in cultures and locations around the world.** These include *wilayah adat, himas, agdals, territorios de vida, territorios del buen vivir, tagal, qoroq-e bumi, yerli qorukh, faritra ifempivelomana*, *qoroq,* ancestral domains, country, community conserved areas, *territorios autonomos comunitarios*, sacred natural sites,[6] locally-managed marine areas, and many others. The ICCA abbreviation may encompass, but should never submerge, the diversity of such terms, which is a value in itself. **Local / customary names should always be preferentially used,** leaving the term 'ICCA' for general or inter-cultural communication. In any case, for many custodian communities, the connection with their territories is much richer than any word or label can express (see box below entitled "More than words can say").

## *Strengthening ICCAs*

**ICCAs maintain and provide both material and non-material values** by, among others, conserving nature, securing livelihoods and rights, and embodying deep spiritual, cultural, and social meaning.

**ICCAs also face substantial external and internal threats**— from encroachment by extractive activities to outright land grabbing, to socio-cultural and demographic change. This is why many, including the ICCA Consortium, attempt to raise awareness of such threats and offer appropriate support for ICCA self-strengthening, *where such support is desired by custodian communities*.

Experience suggests that **an ICCA is strong when its custodian community demonstrates integrity and agency and when the ICCA's three defining characteristics**— i.e., community-territory connection, endogenous governance institution, and results for conservation and sustainable livelihoods and well-being— **are powerful and healthy.**

> Iran: The Abholassani tribe found a way to adapt to climate change by consciously deciding to change its livelihood activities and relationship with the territory while maintaining its governance and internal solidarity and integrity.
> (details to be included)

Generally, the stronger these three characteristics are, the more **secure and resilient** the ICCA is to the many processes of change that may affect it. Thus the ICCA Consortium views an **ICCA self-strengthening process** as a **self-defined and controlled series of activities** by which a custodian community becomes, as relevant:

- more **self-aware and knowledgeable** about its ICCA and its importance/significance
- more appreciative of its **history, culture and governance institutions**
- better able to **govern and manage** its ICCA with **integrity and vision**
- better **connected with other communities** and other dependable **friends and allies** in civil society, government, etc.
- **better recognised, respected and appropriately supported** locally, nationally and beyond
- **wiser**, **more responsible** and more capable of providing **positive responses to ICCA opportunities and threats, learning from experience, innovating** and **preventing** and **solving problems**

The same process is expected to advance **territories** that:

- are **better conserved,** e.g., protected, sustainably used and/or restored
- have higher **ecological integrity and resilience**
- provide better support for the custodian community's **livelihoods and well being**

Finally, and importantly, an SSP is expected to **enhance the connection between a custodian community and its territory.**

ICCA SSPs have been defined and sustained by custodian communities throughout history and all over the world, acting on their own and/or with allies and partners, in particular other communities. Today, there are a number of newly emerging options for communities seeking support in such processes. In particular, SSPs can be facilitated by **national strategic/ catalytic organizations** as part of the **Global Support Initiative (GSI)** – the initiative for which this guidance document has been prepared (see below).

## *Audiences for the guidance document*

The lessons and suggestions collected in this document are based on the work of the ICCA Consortium and its Members over a few decades, in a wide variety of socio-cultural and ecological contexts. **As each context and community is unique, each SSP is unique**. The **guidance document should** thus **be applied flexibly**, adapting it to meet the needs of each ICCA and custodian community.

This document is primarily directed to facilitators willing to accompany ICCA custodian communities in self-strengthening processes. Facilitators may be internal or external to the community, but must in all cases be accepted and invited by the community. This includes those from **national strategic/ catalytic organisations that wish to accompany emblematic ICCAs in priority countries** as part of the GSI. Other entities may also be interested in using the document to facilitate self-strengthening processes, such as groupings and federations of ICCA custodian communities, civil society organizations, researchers and government staff.

SSPs are particularly important for communities expecting to receive, or having already received, a GSI grant from the Small Grants Programme (SGP) of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). The process can strengthen an ICCA and its custodian community, including through ongoing self-monitoring and evaluation — an essential aspect of implementing a GSI grant.

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### What do we mean by…?

The **ICCA Global Support Initiative** – GSI for short— aims "to improve the recognition and overall effectiveness for biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods and resilience to climate change effects of territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities". It supports the work of **national strategic/ catalytic organisations** – civil society organizations in each participating country that partner with custodian communities and others to appropriately support ICCAs (particularly '**emblematic ICCAs**') and assist in the development of '**ICCA networks'**, as desired and fitting for each national context and in line with defined terms of reference. The GSI also provides grants to support community-based initiatives to strengthen ICCAs.[7]

**Emblematic ICCAs** are those that have **great potential to be inspiring examples**. They may be representative sites (e.g., common ecosystems or situations) or highly visible sites (e.g., historically or culturally important or otherwise well-known). Emblematic ICCAs may also include those where current threats to culture and nature are so great that self-strengthening would serve as an inspiration and example for other communities and allies. In sum, emblematic ICCAs need not be 'perfect ICCAs' or ICCAs without problems, but they surely should have intrinsic energy and charisma.

**ICCA networks** are formal or informal groups of communities, organizations and individuals concerned with ICCA-relevant policy and practices that decide to collaborate in active ways. For instance, diverse organizations and individuals may create an ICCA **working group** to share experiences and pool resources to understand a topic of common interest. A number of communities may create an ICCA **federation or association** to advocate for a change in policy that concerns them all. While a working group is flexible and relatively informal, an association or federation is more formal and needs to fit national legal requirements. ICCA **coalitions** and **platforms** are other options. These are especially useful for addressing specific, pressing issues, such as promoting the recognition of customary rights in a watershed or opposing a dam project.  While available human and organizational capacities inform the types of ICCA networks that are possible and desirable in any given context, networks are encouraged to develop a national scope because of the particularly useful roles they could play at that level (see Module 7).

## *Structure and content*

The document includes a discussion on ICCAs, general guidance for facilitators, a self-strengthening 'roadmap', and a form to collect basic information for any ICCA. The roadmap is organized into **seven discrete Modules**. Our aim is to provide essential information in a concise way, with links to additional resources and tools.[8] The Modules are:

1. Enhancing ICCA awareness and planning a self-strengthening process
2. Describing and documenting the ICCA
3. Assessing and analysing ICCA security and resilience
4. Developing appropriate ICCA initiatives and project proposals
5. Self-monitoring for on-going learning and strengthening
6. Communicating about the ICCA
7. Networking and advocating for appropriate ICCA recognition and support

While the roadmap is laid out in a 'step-wise' approach for simplicity, self-strengthening processes vary depending on what each community needs. They can be ordered as seen fit by the community, and specific initiatives may involve only some of these Modules. Communities may also have specific directions or issues they wish to focus on – e.g., food sovereignty, cultural continuity, or climate change adaptation. **The roadmap is not a blueprint or a linear process, but a pathway to be developed and defined by the custodian community** (see Figure 1).

Each step described in the Modules is grounded in the **main self-strengthening activity** – **internal dialogue, reflection and analysis** undertaken in **grassroots discussions**, meaning a series of discussions organized in ways that are consistent with the normal social and cultural life of the community (see Module 1).

Each Module includes suggested **key questions to explore** in grassroots discussions, a basic **description of objectives and activities**, a description of key **concepts and terms**, and links to **resources and tools** to be consulted as needed. Most Modules focus on activities that can be undertaken by single custodian community. Module 7, however, is dedicated to seeking appropriate recognition and support for ICCAs at national and international levels, which typically cannot be achieved by any single community. It may

still start from one community's grassroots discussions, but it soon requires interaction, networking and organizing among several communities and other partners. In this sense, Module 7 is about **mutual strengthening** for a common purpose in broader society.

Figure 1 – ICCA self-strengthening process
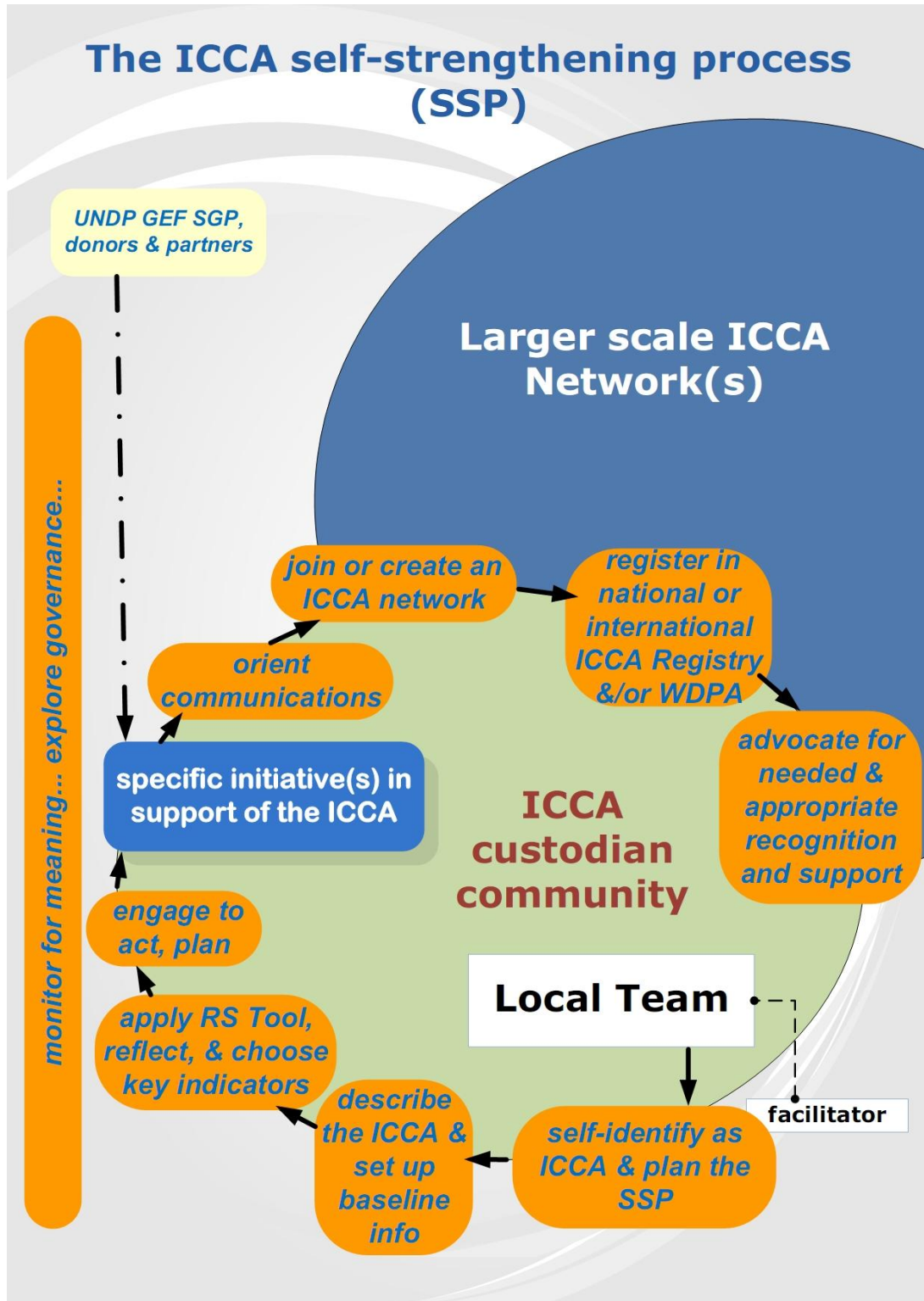
## *Understanding and appreciating ICCAs*

ICCAs are **highly diverse**, including in terms of size, longevity, ecosystem and resources, objectives, values and uses, degree of formal recognition and security of tenure of their custodians.  What they all have in common is the fact of being examples of **local— and usually highly legitimate— community governance of specific territories**.

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### What do we mean by…?

**Management** is about **what is done** in a given territory to reach one or more specific objectives. It usually concerns a set of activities and the means of carrying them out.

**Governance** is about **who decides** about that given territory**, how decisions are taken** and **who makes sure that decisions are implemented**. This includes decisions about the objectives and means of management. Governance concerns **power**, **authority and responsibility**, including how powers and responsibilities are exercised and who is (or should be) held accountable.[9]

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While **ICCA governance varies widely,** it typically involves local institutions embedded in the custodian communities' collective knowledge and capacities. Many ICCAs, for example, are rooted in long-standing systems of sustainable management and use of "wild" biodiversity, as well as agro-biodiversity maintenance and supported evolution. Typically, ICCAs are deeply engrained in the cultures that define and care for them.

While diverse, ICCAs share some common attributes. They are **self-identified**, and can only be **sustained by the communities that govern and manage them**. As further explored in Module 1, **'well-defined ICCAs'** fully embody the three key characteristics: strong community-territory connection, well-functioning community governance institution, and effective results for conservation of nature and human well- being. Other ICCAs may have some, but not all three of these attributes, and we refer to them as **'disrupted ICCAs'** or **'desired ICCAs'**.

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### What do we mean by…?

**Defined ICCAs**– these are ICCAs that currently exhibits all three characteristics - i.e., the strong community-territory connection, the well-functioning governance institution and the positive results for nature and the community

**Disrupted ICCAs** – these are ICCAs had all three characteristics in the past, but do not today (though they may still have one or two) because of disturbances that the community believes it can still reverse or counteract

**Desired ICCAs** – these are ICCAs that never had all three characteristics (though they may have one or two today) but have the *potential* of developing the three characteristics through new, or newly effective, community engagement

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ICCAs are also wide spread. While precise coverage data is not yet available, existing information suggests they cover **many millions of hectares of landscapes and seascapes.**[10] For example, Kothari *et al.* (2012) estimate that ICCAs may cover more than 12% of the planet's terrestrial surface or as much as the world's country-designated protected areas.[11] ICCAs have also been found, under certain conditions, to be more effective than state protected areas at preventing deforestation and conserving biodiversity.[12] Despite increasing recognition in international policy,[13] however, many ICCAs remain unrecognized in statutory law by various national governments.

## *Multiple values*

ICCAs embody many material and non-material values. Specific relationships and values should be identified by their custodian communities, not by outsiders. Experience across the world illustrates that such values may include:

- **secured livelihoods** – when the ICCA provides food, water, energy, fodder, income
- **social resilience** – when the ICCA preserves natural resources for times of scarcity or stress, such as climatic events, social conflict, or natural and social disasters, and thereby supports community capacity to survive and adapt to change
- a foundation and reflection of **cultural identity**
- **spiritual significance** – when the ICCA coincides with or includes sacred sites or spiritual presences
- **pride and community spirit**, including for youth
- sources and expressions of **empowerment**
- embodiment of **collective rights and responsibilities**
- demonstration of **sovereignty** within colonised states
- **continuance** as distinct peoples and as custodians of bio-cultural diversity
- **links to community history**, including in relatively new ICCAs

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**More than words can say…**
(adapted from ICCA Consortium, 2013)

**ICCAs** embody livelihoods, energy and health. For their custodian communities, they are a source of identity and culture, autonomy and freedom. They connect generations, preserving memories and practices from the past and linking those to the desired future. They are the ground on which communities learn, identify values and develop self-rule. For many, they also connect visible and invisible realities, material and spiritual wealth. With territory and nature go life, dignity and self-determination as peoples.

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While long-known by their custodian communities, ICCAs are being increasingly recognized by international bodies for their contributions to the conservation of nature, which span:

- **preservation**, e.g., the careful custodianship of sacred sites through strict access and use rules

- **sustainable use,** e.g., regulated collective and wise access and use of forests, fisheries and pastures

- **restoration and enrichment,** e.g., community-restored forests, alpine pastures maintained by active grazing, or mangrove areas and fisheries restored through new rules devised and enforced locally

## *Threats*

Today, many communities, organisations and individuals are increasingly conscious of and taking action on ICCAs because of the substantial threats they face. Such threats can be internal and/or external, and are often inter-related.

**Internal threats** vary but may arise from, among others:

- **political and social fragmentation** that affects the functioning of community governance institutions
- **rapid change in community behaviour and aspirations** (lifestyles) leading to a degraded local environment
- **interruption or loss of the customary ways** of passing ecological knowledge from elders to youth
- internal **inequities, corruption, conflicts or crimes**
- **widespread movements of people,** including youth, in or out of the territory, leading to profound changes in the demographics and socio-cultural coherence of the community
- **lack of access to information** about national and international laws and policies and global environmental change

Internal political and socio-cultural change, however, often relates to external causes, such as formal development and education initiatives, evangelization, advertising and other (often well-intentioned) interventions that **undermine the customary/ endogenous institutions governing ICCAs**. For example, government agencies and NGOs with conservation objectives in mind may 'take over' or impose new governance types or structures that are inappropriate and ineffective for the both the ICCAs and the local communities, and that may generate or exacerbate conflict within and/or between communities.

**External or imposed threats** can also more directly undermine community efforts to care for its territory. These threats also vary, but often include:

- disruptive **economic forces,** including extractive industries, major infrastructure development, industrial fishing and agriculture, and mass tourism. These may affect the ICCA and local community directly (e.g., because of economic, cultural or physical displacement) or indirectly (e.g., via pollution, resource degradation, invasive species or climate change).
- **national legislation and 'development' policies unfavourable to ICCAs**, including trade rules and financial agreements that strengthen the forces that oppose ICCAs
- **national and international conservation policies and practices** that fail to recognize ICCAs, impede the enforcement of community conservation rules and undermine/ corrupt community spirit (e.g., gratuities, power plays…)
- **political/ social insecurity** leading to war, violent conflict or widespread crime

Underlying and exacerbating a variety of internal and external threats is often **insecure tenure to land, water and bio-cultural diversity**.[14] To keep their ICCA secure, the custodian community's roles and rights must be recognized and respected by their neighbours, governments, private sector actors, CSOs and society in general. This includes, in particular, their rights to access and use their territories and bio-cultural diversity. Insecure or unrecognized tenure poses risks of 'land and water grabbing', encroachment and forced eviction, among others.

Internal and external threats and insecure land or resource tenure often combine and contribute to the erosion of local knowledge and attachment to the environment, the loss of local language and cultural

practices, and the abandonment of traditional patterns of learning (such as the relationships between elders and youth), with powerful impacts on ICCA governing institutions.


## *Opportunities*

Many communities also have internal and external opportunities to support and strengthen their ICCAs. Internally – **within the community** – there may be convening power, wisdom, inventiveness, positive values and traditions, economic resources and plenty of knowledge and capacities to care for the ICCA. In some cases, all of these are known and valued attributes. In other cases, they may not be fully appreciated, and enhanced awareness could enable the community to take fuller advantage of its own power and capacity for self-determined objectives.

Opportunities from the larger society also exist and are actually expanding.  The recognition of ICCAs in **international biodiversity law and conservation policy**, notably by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), has been steadily growing since the turning of the millennium. This recognition is providing increasing legal weight and normative influence in relation to protected and conserved areas,[15] traditional knowledge, customary sustainable use, ecosystem restoration, resource mobilisation and financial mechanisms, and sustainable development.[16] Appropriate recognition of ICCAs can also be an effective means to implement international human rights law, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples[17] and human rights vis-à-vis the environment.[18]  It has been argued that ICCAs can be effective non-market based mechanisms to mitigate and adapt to climate change.[19] Moreover, international advocacy for ICCAs is expanding into food and agriculture policies[20] and safeguards for business and finance.

Civil society organizations and others working at the international level may also offer opportunities of interest for custodian communities, such as appropriate recognition; technical, financial or advocacy support; or networking support. The ICCA Consortium has played a substantive role in promoting and supporting such opportunities and offers to ICCA custodian communities the option of joining and collaborating with peer organisations. The Consortium is now expanding its operations to be able to assist more communities and countries in the years to come.  The IUCN recognises ICCAs as one of the four main governance types for conservation and is engaged in furthering their recognition as part of national processes of governance assessment, evaluation and enhancement[21] in six pilot countries throughout the world. The World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) has also recently developed an ICCA Registry and is ready to include ICCAs in that Registry, in its World Database of Protected Areas (WDPA) or in both, as appropriate.

With regard to **national law and policy**, the treatment of ICCAs varies widely. Some of those threaten ICCAs (see the section on threats). Several countries, however, already provide effective legal and social recognition and technical, financial and other types of support to territorial governance by indigenous peoples and local communities— and to ICCAs in particular.

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**National legal and policy instruments that recognise ICCAs**
(adapted from Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2010)

**Ideally, ICCAs are recognized as coherent land, water and natural resource units governed by self-defined communities under a common title (property or right to govern and use) that is inalienable,**

**indivisible and established in perpetuity.** In practice, there are diverse legal instruments and frameworks across different countries that align more and less well with these ideals. Examples include:

- Legislation addressing the **collective legal and/or customary tenure, governance and rights** of indigenous peoples and/or local communities to their territories and ancestral lands, waters and natural resources. This kind of legislation in some cases applies only to specific communities, such as mountain communities, tribal peoples living in forest environments, coastal communities managing customary fishing grounds or slave-descendant communities (Quilombolas, Afro-Colombian communities, etc.).  In other cases, it applies to all "indigenous peoples" in a country that can satisfy certain requirements of ancestral domains. And it may refer to specific collective endeavours (e.g., transhumance). Recognition in legislation may be fully independent from conservation results, although it may be strengthened by being combined with the recognition of the conservation results consequent to the exercise of the customary tenure, governance and rights.

- **Protected area laws** that embrace the full spectrum of protected area governance types, including governance by indigenous peoples and local communities, within and outside a national protected area system.[22] In this sense, communities with a demonstrated capacity to conserve territories and areas of national biodiversity value are provided with an important degree of self-determination as they continue to provide benefits to society at large. Protected area frameworks can provide both legal backing and financial support for communities to govern themselves while fending off threats from concessions for extractive activities and mega infrastructures. Recent CBD decisions have stressed the need to properly recognise ICCAs also when they overlap with official government protected areas through positive collaboration between the relevant protected area authorities and communities.[23]

- **Sectoral policies** in forestry and wildlife, agriculture, tourism, mining, fisheries, finance and economic development that recognise indigenous peoples and local communities as legal subjects with collective rights and responsibilities. These often regulate special types of community concessions and privileges, such as for fishing, hunting, gathering and the sustainable use of forests.

- **Land tenure and decentralisation policies** that recognise indigenous peoples and local communities as legal subjects with collective rights and responsibilities and effective conservation measures for ecologically important or sensitive areas, such as watersheds, rivers, lakes, wetlands and coastal zones. As part of such recognition, decision-making is brought back to the community level through various forms of negotiation and local, sub-national and national governments agree to declare ICCAs 'off-limits' to destructive activities.  While collective private property (which includes access, use and disposal) offers the most powerful bundle of rights, even secured rights of use of land or water under a variety of ownership regimes (e.g. private, state or municipal) can effectively sustain an ICCA on the basis of local by-laws and municipal ordinances. The important element is that the arrangements succeed in developing a strong, long-term association between the ICCA and its custodian community and that the community is allowed to develop and enforce the relevant rules.

Many custodian communities appreciate not only legal and policy recognition for their ICCAs, but also social recognition and— as appropriate— recognition in practice via judicial, police, administrative, technical, financial, developmental, research, advocacy and networking support. Social recognition is very important for many indigenous peoples and local communities.[24]  Working with allied governments, civil society organizations, donors, private entities and other supportive actors, opportunities for social recognition of the conservation, cultural, livelihood or other values of ICCAs can be sought via exposure

in the media, during events and ceremonies, and by assigning honours and awards. In the long run, the incorporation of ICCA information in school and relevant professional curricula is particularly effective. Crucially, however, recognition in practice is what often makes the most difference.

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### Social recognition and recognition in practice

**Social recognition** can be understood as appropriate public attention, acknowledgement and praise. It can take the form of official mentions and inscriptions, honours and awards, media exposure for desired visibility and it can provide a community with a variety of platforms to make their ICCA initiatives publicly known, if desired, and better respected. But social recognition can also be damaging, as when it engenders unwanted exposure or generates/ exacerbates tensions… for instance when some communities, or individuals within a particular community, are highlighted over others.[25]

Powerful **ways to recognise ICCAs in practice**[26] include**:**

- ensuring that the police and the judicial system **back-up** and do not contradict the communities in their **surveillance and enforcement operations** and in providing **fair and coherent judgement and sanctions for violators**

- establishing, honouring and diffusing information about local agreements and mechanisms that recognise specific ICCAs and their custodian communities, making sure that **local land use plans and development plans integrate and foresee ICCAs and do not contradict them and their rules**.

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International and national civil society organizations can also provide partnership and support. A good example is offered by the strategic/ catalytic organizations that facilitate GSI implementation in the priority countries with the support of UNDP GEF SGP.

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### What do we mean by…?

**Recognition and support** can provide important opportunities for ICCAs. On the other hand, they can also undermine the integrity and strength of custodian communities. To avoid doing harm, support should be **appropriate**, including:

- being invited and defined by the custodian community

- building upon (and not diminishing) community integrity and strength

- strengthening (and not lessening) the connection between the community and its territory

- referring to explicit ethical principles[27] and, in particular, respecting self-determination and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)

Appropriate support is distinct from externally defined or imposed 'support', no matter how well-intentioned. The appropriateness of different forms of recognition & support should be determined by the relevant communities with full awareness and information on the pros and cons of each option.

## *Community responses to threats and opportunities*

Custodian communities respond to the many threats and opportunities they face by defending and strengthening their ICCAs in various ways. They can act alone or in alliance with other ICCA custodians, and with or without support from outside. Generally, they demand **recognition as rightful governing bodies for their conserved territories,** and often decline 'opportunities' for external recognition and support that do not align with their own visions and values.

Effective community strategies in considering and responding to threats and opportunities have included:

- **internal organizing and analysis** – e.g., study groups and action committees to analyze and document their ICCAs, dialogues between elders and youth, gender analyses, ICCA capacity building events and exchange visits (see Modules 2 and 6)

- development and implementation of **specific initiatives**, with or without external support (see Module 4)

- **information dissemination, including about threats** – e.g., alerts and reports made through radio, TV, press, posters and the Internet and via alliances with journalists (see Module 6)

- **networking locally, nationally and internationally,** including as part of national and international alliances (see Module 7)

- **diplomatic action**, in particular policy advocacy in various types of meetings and parliamentary hearings (see Modules 6 and 7)

- **legal action**, from local reconciliation processes to legal cases in national courts to appeals to the attention of regional human rights courts (see Module 7)

- **demonstrations and civil disobedience** in intractable or extreme cases, including marches and protests, strikes and picket lines, road blockades and human barricades (see Modules 6 and 7)

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## *Resources for further understanding ICCAs and the GSI*

**Websites:**
ICCA Consortium
ICCA Registry
IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme governance website
GSI (SGP webpage and ICCA Consortium webpage)

**Publications:**
Bio-cultural diversity conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities – examples and analysis
Recognising and supporting ICCAs - global overview and national case studies
Governance of protected areas: from understanding to action
A primer on governance for protected and conserved areas
ICCAs and Aichi Targets

## *Guidance for facilitators*

The following are recommendations for SSP facilitators in general and for national strategic/ catalytic organisations in particular.[28]

**Respect and support the custodian communities' self-determination.** Accompany and support custodian communities to achieve what they wish to achieve and be what they wish to be.  An ICCA can only be self-defined by its custodian community and documented or communicated with their FPIC. Refer to conserved territories by their local names or terms and ensure self-strengthening processes are defined and controlled by custodians. Recognize and respect community knowledge and capacity. If asked to help prepare documentation, do so under community leadership and direction.

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### What do we mean by…?

**Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)** means **being able to say "yes" or "no"** to any action / proposal that will impact a community's lands, waters, bio-cultural diversity or rights. It means making this decision:
- **free** from any coercion, force, threats, or intimidation
- **prior** to any action being taken towards that decision
- **informed** by all of the relevant information about the options

The decision-making processes should be determined by the community. They should provide ample time and be in accessible languages and formats. Communities should have access to legal and technical assistance if requested.[29]

While consent must be verified before any activities start, FPIC is not a 'one-off' event or a matter of ticking a box. Consent must be maintained, including by having a **processes in place to check-in or monitor that the agreement is being upheld as expected** and that a community can raise new concerns or grievances if unexpected developments become apparent.[30]

FPIC is an internationally recognized collective right of indigenous peoples and widely agreed ethical best practice with regard to non-indigenous communities. It is an integral component of self-determination.

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**Take all possible precautions to avoid doing harm.** Discussing and documenting ICCAs has political implications – both outside of and within the community. Be aware of the local context and history, including any external or internal threats, conflicts or tensions. Engage where explicitly invited, and seek and respect FPIC. Respect individual and community anonymity wherever requested for any reason or needed for safety.

**Ensure culturally and contextually respectful and accessible activities.** Recognize and respect local governance systems and ways of knowing and working. If there are local norms, protocols, religious obligations or rituals for meeting or representation, work with these. Designated community members (the 'Local Team' – see below) should always work with facilitators to help organize, facilitate and

document meetings. Carefully consider the time, location, languages, seating arrangements and preferred ways of communication in the grassroots discussions. Be transparent. Do not raise undue expectations. Make sure that the Local Team announces any proposed meeting in advance, through accessible channels, and is clear about its topic and purpose. If there are groups that are not comfortable or welcome to speak freely in a large meeting (e.g., in some cultures, women, youth or ethnic minorities) see whether it is appropriate to hold smaller meetings, or to ensure time and space for smaller groups to meet amongst themselves before joining any large group.

**Ensure meaningful language and terminology**. The guidance offered in this document includes examples of questions to stimulate discussion. Work with community members to make sure that such questions are contextually meaningful and appropriate, in particular by making sure that translators know how to translate information into local languages. If applicable, revise issues and questions with translators well in advance of meetings, to make sure that the terms they will use are locally meaningful. What terms do people use for 'conserved territory', 'community' or the process of making decisions about their ICCA? Using locally appropriate terms makes a large difference in comprehension and attitude.

**Ensure accurate documentation, with FPIC and confidentiality as desired**. Pictures, notes and records help to ensure that discussions are accurately reported, but permission for those should be explicitly granted before the initial meeting and additionally as needed. Moreover, some individuals may wish to remain anonymous or have the chance to make amendments to the records.

**Use this document as a guide, but not as a blueprint or rigid instruction.** Discuss the process with the Local Team (see later) and the community and adapt it so that it is locally meaningful. The SSP roadmap is meant to be flexible and tailored to the context, with the scope and focus of activities determined by the community. The questions proposed to stimulate and enliven the grassroots discussion should be taken as entry points. Facilitators are then encouraged to find a balance between letting the discussion flow freely and appropriately guiding it to help ensure that the key questions/ topics are covered in a meaningful way.

## Considerations for good facilitation
### (adapted from Shrumm and Jonas, 2012)

- Make sure that participants can express themselves in their own language and terms
- Ensure a respectful and open atmosphere
- Be an open and active listener
- Recognize participants' ideas and capacities
- Be respectful, sensitive and patient
- Play a supporting / accompanying role
- Respect local culture, protocols and traditions
- Develop a positive rapport with participants, cultivating trust and confidence
- Be consistent, honest and clear
- Be transparent about the potential benefits and risks of engaging in any process
- Remain neutral and calm in case of disagreement
- Be aware of behaviour and levels of participation
- Enable separate meetings for specific people or groups whenever desired
- Make sure that participants keep their overall objectives in mind
- Help focus the discussion on key issues
- Keep up positive momentum

## Resources and tools for ethical and effective facilitation and support

**Websites:**

The International Society for Ethnobiology (ISE) Code of Ethics

Critical Information Collective (CIC) ethical guidelines for photography

Learning for Sustainability facilitation tools

Barefoot guide tools and exercises

**Publications:**

*A Toolkit for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities who Manage and Govern their Conservation Areas – Building capacity from existing expertise and new tools*

*Community Protocol Toolkit*

*Designing and facilitating creative learning activities*

*Practical Ethics for PGIS*

*Key Elements to the Initiation, Performance and Maintenance of Good Faith Consultations and Negotiations with Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and Communities*

*Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) Training Toolkit*

*Facilitator Tool Kit – A guide for helping groups get results*

*Collecting better information from a story*

*Promoting gender-transformative change with men and boys*

*UN Resource Kit on Indigenous Peoples Issues*

*What is action research?*

# Part II: Roadmap for an ICCA Self-Strengthening Process

## Module 1— Enhancing awareness and planning a self-strengthening process

This Module focuses on:

- ensuring the community has **time to discuss and decide** internally
- enhancing **self-awareness and knowledge** about the ICCA and its significance
- clarifying whether the ICCA is **'defined', 'disrupted', or 'desired'**
- introducing what an **ICCA self-strengthening process** could be
- **planning** a self-strengthening process


### *Ensuring time for inclusive discussions and decisions*

Ideally, the community will have invited facilitators, or their organizations, and requested their support. Also ideally, facilitators would already have a relationship of trust with at least some members of the community. In all cases, when and as appropriate, facilitators should introduce themselves openly and honestly and explain why they are there, including discussing the characteristics of the ICCA concept and what they mean by a 'self-strengthening process' (SSP). This may be done through one or a combination of the following:

- meeting with community elders, ICCA custodians and leaders and hold an in-depth and straightforward discussion about the SSP and its sponsors, answering all questions they may pose
- organizing a visit of several days to meet the community and its leaders at a leisurely pace and answering questions as they may arise in conversations
- walking through the ICCA together with community members (transect walk) and discussing the key issues at stake with the help of any existing (or quickly sketched) maps or other documentation the community may like to share
- if invited, meeting the community in one of its traditional gatherings or customary events and seeking permission to introduce themselves and the idea of the SSP there
- having in-depth discussions with some individuals about possible community interest in an ICCA SSP. The individuals would then discuss it with the rest of the community at their own discretion

Whatever the approach, the **custodian community should be able to discuss, at its own pace, whether it relates to an 'ICCA', whether it is interested in the proposed 'SSP' and - if so - how it would like to engage**. This is a critical step in ensuring that the SSP is community-led and that it is grounded in the custodian's FPIC.  It is important here not to give the false impression that the self-strengthening process is primarily about "developing a project proposal" and/or attracting financial resources. Proposals may be developed where doing so is helpful in reaching specific community-defined ICCA self-strengthening goals, but these should be strongly anchored in the community's values and institutions and not aim at the financial or other benefit or particular individuals or groups.  It is also important to clarify that – if the facilitator belongs to an organization – the engagement of such organisation in any future initiative to support the ICCA should be an independent decision of the community.

## *Enhancing self-awareness of the ICCA*

SSPs may start from relatively small meetings between key people in the community and facilitators, but soon or later involve a series of larger gatherings, which we refer to as 'grassroots discussions'. Importantly, facilitators need to work closely with a Local Team of community members who are knowledgeable and willing to be at the forefront of the SSP. **A good Local Team generally emerges on its own**. There may be people already involved in governing and managing the ICCA, or new volunteers and leaders may surface during the grassroots discussions. If local people appear reluctant or unenthusiastic, and/or if the community leaders hasten to request personal benefits, the community may not be ready for the SSP and there is little point in insisting. It is also important to be wary of 'volunteers' who are not respected by the community and/or unlikely to represent its best interests.

If a community has specific institutions and norms for making decisions about natural resources, the Local Team and facilitator should work with those, and not seek to bypass or modify them. Perhaps there are regular gatherings, such as a general assembly, where issues can be discussed. Perhaps the community feels more comfortable with a series of smaller meetings with existing groups, e.g., an elders' council, a women's cooperative, a youth association. The focus should be on meeting the community via its own existing institutions, rather than attempting to 'organize the community' from outside. Attention should be paid to engaging community members of different ages, genders, livelihood bases, languages or ethnic groups, but community institutions should not be 'engineered' as part of their self-strengthening process, no matter how well-meaning the facilitators are.

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### What do we mean by...?

**Grassroots discussions** are discussions that provide occasions for **dialogue, reflection and analysis** and are **organized in ways consistent with the normal social and cultural life of the community**—e.g., a traditional general assembly, gatherings among elders or in existing women's groups or youth associations.

An SSP **Local Team** (or other locally meaningful name) is an **informal group of community members** who are **knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the ICCA** and willing to **coordinate, facilitate and document the self-strengthening process**. The team should include capable, well-respected and available volunteers who ideally reflect the community's diversity, including in terms of age, gender, profession and ethnicity. It may be an existing or newly formed group, depending on the context. However, the Team should not be formalised or give the wrong impression that it possesses special authority on the ICCA. Its members should agree to serve the community rather than act as self-appointed leaders.

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The Local Team is crucial to the SSP. Facilitators must use their best judgment and sensitivity in developing mutual understanding and trust with an active, genuinely engaged, diverse, well-respected and culturally appropriate Local Team. Similarly, **communities must exercise utmost care before accepting any 'facilitator' to engage them into a process**. They must make sure that they fully

understand the topic, scope and objectives of the process and trust that they will remain in control of what they will explore and learn about. It is therefore important that the facilitator refrain from always being present in the discussions. Rather, the facilitator can encourage people to discuss the issues among themselves with freedom to express any opinion they may have. Only if and when the clear general opinion is that the community is interested in pursuing the ICCA self-strengthening process should the facilitator feel confident in going ahead. (See more details on applying FPIC in the Resources and Tools section.)

The Local Team works with the support of the facilitator to:

- plan and announce the grassroots discussions
- ensure accessibility to all who would like to have a voice
- facilitate meetings and ensure meaningful process, language and terminology
- encourage discussion on the basis of factual information and shared values
- facilitate intra-community communication and conflict management, as appropriate
- document the meetings (e.g., via taking notes, filling templates, tape recording, taking pictures, videos)  and communicate about their results (e.g., via simple reports made available to all, if at all possible on line)
- identify people who demonstrate knowledge, experience, capacity or enthusiasm about the ICCA, and promote their full engagement in the SSP whenever opportunities arise
- coordinate monitoring, and report to the community and partners

As part of an initial grassroots discussion, the custodian community confirms whether an ICCA exists. In order to stimulate the discussion, the facilitator may offer some questions (see Discussion questions 1.1) while keeping in mind that the objective is to promote internal dialogue, reflection and analysis and not to generate or extract information.  **It is not necessary to use all suggested questions; focus on those that generate interest and participation and that are most relevant for the particular community.**

This enhanced 'self-awareness' is important for any community, particularly for members who may be less engaged with the ICCA then others. The Local Team and facilitator can remind everyone that an ICCA can only be identified by its custodian community and should be referred to by the terms and names they chose. They may also recall that caring for an ICCA is both a privilege and a responsibility.

## Discussion questions 1.1 – ICCA self-Identification

These questions are about the **three core characteristics** of ICCAs.

### 1.  The connection between the community and its territory

- What is the **history of the relationship** between the community and its natural and cultural environment?  What are the crucial moments/ events in that history?  What are the key decisions the community has taken (or should have taken) vis-à-vis that environment?  Who was or should have been in charge of taking those decisions and having those respected?

- Is there a **strong connection/ bond/ relationship between the community and any specific territory, area or any species and its habitat in the environment?**  Can the community clearly identify that "territory"? Is that connection related to history and the community's own sense of identity as a people or community?  Is it related to the community's livelihoods and income? Is it related to the community's culture, language, or spirituality?  Is it related to the community's

sense of security or capacity to withstand hardships and stress? What does the community consider to be the main components of that 'connection'?

## 2. The community governance

- Does the community have **rules** about access to and use of the territory and its natural resources? Does the community possess **a way of making decisions about that territory**? Might it be a general assembly? A council of elders or spiritual teachers? A trusted leader? (Please consider that some 'governance institutions' are so ingrained in local culture that they become invisible to outsiders and insiders alike.)

- Does the community have **a way of enforcing decisions about that territory**? In other words, is there any surveillance of the rules? Any way to stop or deter violators? Is there a community-based organization, or an elected community council or committee in charge of that?

## 3. The positive results for nature and community well-being

- Is the **territory** being **conserved** and, with that, its natural resources/ species/ habitats, the functions of nature and their values for the community? (Conservation of natural or cultural diversity may or may not be an explicit management objective of the community.)

- Is the **community** being **sustained** and, with that, its **wellbeing** and capacity to govern and conserve the territory? (Livelihood and wellbeing may or may not be an explicit management objective of the community.)

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- If the answer to any of the questions above is negative or unclear... did this use to be positive and clear in the past? When? What has changed since then?

Discussion questions 1.1 can help a community self-identify as a custodian of an ICCA — in the present, in the past, or in a potential future.  In other words, the community can agree on whether an ICCA exists and whether it is:

- **Defined** – the ICCA currently has all three characteristics, i.e., a deep community-territory connection, well-functioning community governance, and effective conservation results
- **Disrupted** – the ICCA previously had all three characteristics but some are currently not fully present because of disturbances that can still be reversed or counteracted
- **Desired** – the ICCA has the potential to develop all three characteristics, but does not have a history of having achieved them before

Note that identifying an ICCA as 'disrupted' or 'desired' is not a judgment of merit, but of fact. Understanding a specific situation inevitably requires an in-depth discussion. For example, ICCAs may be 'disrupted' for many reasons. One may be long-governed by its custodian community, but currently poorly conserved due to internal and/or external conflicts. Another may be well-cared for by a community, but the community may not have a strong or recognized role in decision making because of

political domination by other forces and actors. Likewise, the factors that enable or impede the realization of desired ICCAs may be many and diverse. Those engaged in GSI processes should note that **emblematic ICCAs** are not necessarily fully 'defined' or free of problems, but should at least have **great potential to exhibit the three characteristics**.

## *Planning the self-strengthening process*

If a community is a custodian of an ICCA, a self-strengthening process accompanies it to enhance its own self-awareness, integrity and capacities. Through an SSP, the community can heighten or rekindle the connection with its territory, its governance institution and its positive results (conservation of nature, maintenance of the cultural patrimony, sustainable livelihoods, food sovereignty...). Among others, activities might include documentation, analysis, specific initiatives, monitoring, communication, networking and advocacy as described in Modules 2 - 7. The community may be supported by other communities, partners and facilitators, but it has **control over the activities in which it engages, the documentation it develops, and the access that any others may have to its process and results**.

Planning the process is important, including towards ensuring FPIC.  As much as possible, however, the **plan should be flexible**, as some issues may not be clear up front, and the custodian community's decisions may shift over the course of the process.

## Discussion questions 1.2 – The self-strengthening process

*At this stage it is not necessary to know the answer to all these questions, but it is good to explore them to consider various options and a preliminary way forward.*

- Is the community willing and ready to engage in the self-strengthening process?

- What are the community's main collective hopes / interests/ concerns regarding the ICCA?  Is there any goal that spontaneously comes to mind?

- Who should be involved in discussing and taking action on the SSP?

- Who could coordinate, facilitate, and keep track of the SSP?

- How would it be easiest and most natural for the community to engage?

- Would it be useful and appropriate to start by 'describing and documenting' the ICCA?  (See Module 2)

- How much time can the community dedicate to this?

- When would it like to begin?

## *Resources and tools for discussing and planning an SSP*

**Methods:**

*(Prioritize any customary or locally familiar methods)*

Discussion circles (see *Effective Engagement Toolkit* examples *here*, *here* and *here*)

Local histories, timelines and trend analysis (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997:137)

Conflict analysis timeline (see Mayers et al 2013:28)

Key informant interviews, focus groups or other semi-structured discussions with small groups (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997:132 -134 and Effective Engagement Toolkit)

Natural group interviews or casual discussions with people where they gather in their day to day lives (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997:131)

Sketch interviews, inviting participants to draw their ideas or reflections (see Effective Engagement Toolkit)

Observational and transect walks and transect diagrams (see Rambaldi et al. 2009)

**Publications:**

*Guidance for community-level FPIC process facilitators*

*Putting Free, Prior, and Informed Consent into Practice in REDD+ Initiatives – Training Manual, including Key steps for applying FPIC* (Learning Block 4)

*Handbook on Free, Prior and Informed Consent: For Practical Use by Indigenous Peoples' Communities*

*Guide to Free Prior and Informed Consent*

*Making FPIC Work: Challenges and Prospects for Indigenous People*

*Respecting free, prior and informed consent - Practical guidance for governments, companies, NGOs, indigenous peoples and local communities in relation to land acquisition*

*A toolkit to support conservation by indigenous peoples and local communities*

*Implementing improved natural resource governance in practice - An action learning handbook for sub-Saharan Africa*

*A guide to using tools for participatory approaches*

*80 tools for participatory development*

*Beyond Fences: Seeking Social Sustainability in Conservation.* *Vol. 1* and *Vol. 2*

*Participatory Methods Toolkit: A practitioner's manual. United Nations University*

*Participatory Learning Action (PLA) Series*

*Participatory dialogue: towards a stable, safe and just society for all*

**See also resources under "Guidance for Facilitators" (above) and, as relevant, resources on conflict resolution (Module 4).**

# Module 2— Describing and documenting the ICCA

This Module focuses on:

- **describing** the key features, values and governance institution of an ICCA
- gathering or generating the basic information necessary to properly **document** it

Accurate description and documentation can help raise awareness about and clarify what the ICCA is, the values it holds for the community and the ways the community governs and cares for it. Both the *outcome* and the *process* of describing and documenting an ICCA can be powerful. **Self-reflection is a form of self-strengthening**. Clarifying territory boundaries and uses and sharing stories about the ICCA can bring people together, including across generations. The information gathered and discussed can also be useful to prepare other activities described in the Roadmap (Modules 3 - 7).

## *Basic information on a specific ICCA*

A grassroots discussion facilitated with the help of Discussion questions 2.1 and the follow-up activities to document the ICCA information can be a compelling way to spark community interest and engagement in the ICCA. If a community would like to consult a simple template to gather **basic information to describe an ICCA** that has been used in field practice, one is provided in Annex 1. The template can be used to guide a discussion or to collect information. Importantly, however, diverse ICCAs will be described by diverse information and not all information needs to be recorded with the same level of detail or precision.

A key aim of this particular discussion is for the **community to develop its own understanding of the crucial elements that need to be recorded and analysed to describe their specific ICCA**, and not a generic one.  The Local Team should be aware of this and fully in charge of gathering and carefully noting the information that emerges during the grassroots discussion. The facilitator may wish to help in note taking, but even more in preparing for the meeting, making sure that the **Local Team** is **ready to gather information and able to order it for future use** (e.g., tape recorded notes, typewritten notes, pictures and videos, clearly filled template, more than one note taker, etc.…).

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## Discussion questions 2.1 – Describing the ICCA

**Key features**

- What is the origin of the ICCA?
- When it was first 'identified' as a specific territory/ area/ habitat of great importance for the community? By whom? Why?
- Is the ICCA clearly defined, e.g., does it have clear boundaries in space and time? Do (or have) these boundaries changed over time? Why?
    *[Consider this question carefully. It often reveals a lot about the ICCA. Also are there maps available? What is its approximate surface area? Are GIS coordinates available?]*

- What does the ICCA include?

  *[Consider specific natural resources, internal sub-divisions and external links. Does it include a maritime area? Fresh water? What ecosystem types? What natural resources, key species, functions?]*

- Does the ICCA include all the territory in which the community lives, including plots that may be owned and cared for by individual families, or only the territory and natural resources that are under communal care and responsibility?

- Is there any overlap with protected areas or other special territorial or administrative subdivisions in the country?

- What is the ICCA's conservation status (e.g., excellent, good, threatened, poor, devastated)? How can the community affirm that?  What indicators are being considered?  What indicators could be assessed to add validity to the estimate? (See also Modules 3 and 5)?

## Community

- Where/ how large is the custodian community?

- Is the community sedentary or mobile?  What languages are spoken / used by the community?

- Is the community homogeneous or are there major differences within it in terms of power, wealth, religion, language, ethnicity or other differences?

- Does the community have a sense of identity?  Does it have a distinctive culture, local ceremonies, local institutions and norms?

- Is the community well off, well enough, struggling to cope, or poor and vulnerable?  How can the community affirm that?  What indicators is the community taking into consideration?  What indicators could add to the validity of this estimate?

- Does the community exhibit internal solidarity, integrity and strength?  How can the community affirm that?  What indicators express what the community *means* by 'integrity' and strength?

## ICCA values

- Is the community aware of its own ICCA? Does it use a specific name to talk about it? Which name? Is that a generic or specific name?

- What are the crucial values of the ICCA for the community? What benefits does it bring?

  *[The values of the ICCA should be identified by the community. To facilitate that, the Local Team and facilitator may ask questions regarding:*

  – *subsistence and economic values, e.g., is the ICCA known and utilised as a source of food, water, income? How and by whom are natural resources used? Is the ICCA used for ceremonial gatherings?  Does it protect resources for times of environmental disaster?*

  – *cultural, spiritual and other non-material values, e.g., is the ICCA related to the local worldview and identity?  Is it culturally or religiously important, e.g. as a place for ceremonies?*

  – *conservation of biological diversity, e.g., are there endemic species or ecosystem functions well known and appreciated/ protected?]*

- Are the ICCA values equally enjoyed and appreciated within the community?  If not, who is more interested and concerned?  Why?

- What crucial values (if any) does the ICCA have for people outside the custodian community?

**Governance and management – ways of making and respecting decisions, and caring about the ICCA**

- What are the community's main objectives for managing/ caring for the ICCA?

  *[Direct objectives might include: continuing the sustainable use of natural resources, securing water, securing income, respecting ancestors, ensuring that natural resources are available in certain seasons or during times of scarcity, protecting the habitat of a valued species, preserving a sacred site, restoring a damaged area, and many others. Consider that 'conservation of nature' and 'conservation of biological and cultural diversity' are much more often an outcome than an explicit management objective for communities.]*

- What does the community do to manage/ care for/ keep the ICCA strong? Are there specific decisions and rules the community members and others need to respect in dealing with the ICCA? Are those clear and well-known to all?

  *[Consider whether there are mechanisms such as zoning, any written or oral management plan, any monitoring system…]*

- Who takes or has taken the main decisions about the ICCA? Is there a local institution that develops rules and makes sure that such rules are respected? How are different groups in the community involved, including women and youth?

- When and how did the governing institution develop/ evolve? Is it long-existing or relatively new? Was it developed by the community, or was it formally established by another institution? Or is it a mix of these?

- Who is actually implementing the decisions taken by the governing institution?  Who is managing and using natural resources in the ICCA? How are different groups involved, such as elders, young people, women and ethnic minorities? Is there anyone mostly involved because of knowledge?  Anyone bringing resources? Anyone offering time and labour?

- How do community members learn about the rules and engage with the ICCA? How are different groups involved, such as elders, young people, women and ethnic minorities?

- Does the community carry out surveillance operations and secure the respect of its decisions and rules regarding the ICCA and its natural resources (e.g., rules of access and use)?  How?


**The ICCA as part of the community's vision and life plan**

- Does the community have a vision of the desired future and life plan ('*plan de vida*'[31])?

- Is the ICCA part of it?  If so, is it a relatively minor or central part of that vision and plan?

- Are there any elements of the community vision and life plan that contradict the continuing existence of the ICCA?   Any elements that support the continuing existence of the ICCA?

- Are local youth aware and active regarding the role of the ICCA as part of the community vision and life plan?


## *From information to documentation*

Documenting the basic information about an ICCA means collecting/ generating and recording/ storing relevant data for future reference. The data may include observations, pictures, lists, inventories, measurements, maps, videos, experimental results, results of visioning exercises,  plans for the desired

future (e.g., the *Planes de Vida* prepared by many indigenous peoples in South America) and much else that seems important to the community and that the community will conserve as baseline information. The information shall be useful for monitoring purposes, i.e. to analyze future change.

Documentation should be gathered and communicated by the custodian community, and by the Local Team in particular. **No information about the ICCA should be produced, reproduced or distributed** by external actors (organisations and individuals, including the facilitator) **without community FPIC**. Facilitated discussion can help to formulate an initial description of the ICCA (see Discussion questions 2.1) and identify the kinds of information that the community would like to gather or generate on an on-going basis to monitor change (see Discussion questions 2.2).

> Manobo (Soté Mindanao, The Philippines): the process and outcomes of developing a 3D map of their ICCA, gathering information and producing a documentation booklet for one of the first ICCAs to be registered in the UNEP WCMC Registry. (Details to be included)

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## *Discussion questions 2.2 – Baseline information for the SSP*

- What basic ICCA information is available today to the community?  In what form?

- Is there any data that is not yet available and it would be useful to have?   In what form?  What will the community do with the information once they have it?

- What types of i**nformation** will help **to implement and monitor the results of the SSP** as initially conceived?  What information will help figure out if it is meeting its objectives?

- How and by whom can the needed information be **documented** (i.e., collected/generated and recorded/stored)? Who within the community may wish to participate?

- What **resources** are needed – time, equipment, funding, training/ facilitation?

- How and with whom will documentation be **shared**?  Who should be part of this decision? (See Module 6)

- Documenting the ICCA may raise some **risks and concerns**.  Does the community see any concerns as particularly important to them?  How could those be addressed?

- Documenting the ICCA may generate some new **opportunities**.  Does the community see any opportunity as particularly important to them?  How could those be taken up?

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Depending on circumstances, the Local Team and facilitator may keep questions 2.1 and questions 2.2 for separate moments or merge them in a single discussion session.  Once the community is clear about what to document and why, the Local Team and facilitator may organize activities to gather or generate any agreed baseline information that has not yet been recorded, and to compile it for proper storage and conservation.

## *Resources and tools for describing and documenting ICCAs*

**Methods:**

*(Prioritize any customary or locally familiar methods)*

Participatory (2D and 3D) mapping of territories, resources, habitats, species and land use zoning (see FAO 2009, IFAD 2009, Mayers et al. 2013:99-101, Rambaldi et al. 2009)

Rightsholder and stakeholder analyses, institutional analyses and participatory institutions and actors mapping (see participatory mapping resources)

Power and drivers-of-change analysis (see Mayers et al 2013: 31,32)

Gender analysis (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan1997:141, 142)

Inventories and analysis of biodiversity (species, habitats, ecosystems, watershed health…) and natural resources

Collection and exhibition of historical and cultural data and artefacts (community heritage centres)

Records and stories of specific events and phenomena (see photo stories)

Records of collective visions and plans, including ICCA governance and management plans and 'planes de vida', community protocols (see Shrumm and Jonas 2012)

Physical demarcation of ICCA boundaries coupled with mechanisms for monitoring, surveillance and protection from threats

Audio, photo or video stories, including of ICCA-related knowledge, skills, resources (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997:135, Lunch and Lunch 2006, Mayers et al. 2013:70, PhotoVoice 2011)

Participatory Geographical Reference System (PGIS) (see Rambaldi et al. 2009)

Seasonal calendars using meaningful drawings or symbols (see See Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997:140)

**Websites and online resources:**

LandMark online mapping platform of collective land and natural resource rights

Photo Voice

Guidelines for PGIS: Training Kit on Participatory Spatial Information Management and Communication

Mapping for Rights

Gender and land rights database

**Publications:**

*Mapping for change: practice, technologies and communication*

*Good practices in participatory mapping*

*Building Critical Awareness of Cultural Mapping: a Workshop Facilitation Guide*

*Ground Truthing Policy - Using Participatory Map-Making to Connect Citizens and Decision Makers*

*Good practices in participatory mapping. Rome, International Fund for Agricultural Development*

*Governing land for women and men: A technical guide to support the achievement of responsible gender-equitable governance land tenure*

*Community forestry rapid appraisal of tree and land tenure*

*Building Critical Awareness of Cultural Mapping: a Workshop Facilitation Guide*

*Mapping for change: practice, technologies and communication*

# Module 3— Assessing and analyzing ICCA security and resilience

This Module focuses on:

- **assessing** ICCA resilience and security
- **analysing** key strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities

Once basic information has been collected, discussed and documented (see Module 2) the community can assess its ICCA's **resilience** (i.e., the capacity to fully recover after damage and effectively respond to the threats and opportunities it faces) and **security** (i.e., the likelihood that it will continue existing and thriving *as an ICCA*). The key consideration is that the assessment and analysis need to make sense for the custodian community.

## *The simplified 'Resilience and Security Tool for ICCAs'*

The self-assessment tool below—a highly simplified version of the **Resilience and Security Tool for ICCAs** produced and used by the ICCA Consortium in 2011-2015— is comprised of a series of questions and a way to 'score' answers and keep note of the key issues in the discussion. The Resilience and Security (R&S) Tool may be used as part of a series of grassroots discussions by the Local Team and facilitator with a number of relatively small groups of peoples in the community, such as gender-based, age-based groups, people who have the same type of relationships with nature, the ICCA governing institution itself, etc.

The simplified Resilience and Security Tool described below focuses on **five essential elements**, considered '**building blocks' of an effective ICCA:**

- the **integrity and strength of the custodian community**
- the **connection between the community and its territory**
- the **functioning of the governance institution**
- the **territory's conservation status**
- the **livelihoods and well-being of the community**

The community members can use the questions about each of these five elements as grounding for a 'summary score' they may wish to give but— more importantly— to identify the key issues at stake.

The 'summary score' resulting from use of this Resilience and Security Tool for ICCAs can be a useful discussion point, but has limited value in and of itself. Scores assigned to complex phenomena are neither precise nor sensitive to small but potentially crucial changes, including in the custodian community's *perception* of the phenomena at stake. Moreover, such scores are highly particular to their context, a fact that may be easily forgotten by people wanting to "compare scores" from different community analyses. If even comparison of scores for the same context through

> Using the (non-simplified) Resilience and Security Tool in the Kawawana marine and coastal ICCA (Casamance, Senegal) at a distance of five years… What have we learned? (Details to be included)

time needs to be carefully discussed and interpreted, comparison of scores from diverse context is meaningless, and could actually be a source of problems.

More interesting than any score is the **participatory analysis of change** carried out by the community with the help of the questions provided by the Resilience and Security Tool. Through time, the key issues identified for the building blocks of a given ICCA can be monitored and analysed by the custodian community and ICCA governance institutions themselves— who can most promptly do something about what they have learned.

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## Resilience and Security Tool for ICCAs
### (simplified version, Feb. 2017, adapted from ICCA Consortium 2013)

### Guidance on using this tool

For each 'building block' of ICCA security and resilience, the Tool offers discussion questions followed by an overarching 'key question'.

The Local Team and facilitator should start by stimulating discussion on the specific topic with the help of the discussion questions. After the discussion has covered a variety of relevant aspects (approximately 10 minutes, varying by context), they should pose the key question and come to a summary of views expressed in one qualitative answer broadly agreed by the group (e.g., from 'does not exist' to 'very strong or healthy'). If desired, the answer could be translated into a score according to a 0 – 5 scale, as in the example noted below.[32]

| 0<br>Does not exist | 1<br>Very weak or degraded | 2<br>Somewhat weak degraded | 3<br>Moderate or mixed | 4<br>Somewhat strong or healthy | 5<br>Very strong or healthy |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**Much more important than translating the overall discussion into a score is that the Local Team and facilitator pay careful attention to note-taking.** If the overall assessment is that the building block is 'weak', what are the main weaknesses and what contributes to them? If it is 'strong', what are those strengths, and what contributes to them? Are there current or anticipated threats or opportunities that weaken or strengthen this factor? And so on…

If a question seems to identify an exceptionally critical or paramount issue for the community and the ICCA, the note takers should highlight the answer and also capture as carefully as possible the community views and possible recommendations.

At the end of using the Tool, a 'total score' can be assigned by adding up all of the scores of the five building blocks, as follows:

| 0 – 5<br>Not secure or resilient | 5 - 10<br>Insecure, low resilience | 10 - 15<br>Somewhat insecure, low resilience | 15-20<br>Reasonably secure and resilient | 20-25<br>Highly secure and resilient |
|---|---|---|---|---|

The **summary** score will be between 0 and 25, and it will offer **an *approximate* indication of the ICCA's overall resilience and security**.  It is critical to understand that the score provides a *community-specific, informed estimate* of resilience and security. It should **never be taken as a precise measure, compared across contexts, or, under any circumstances, used to rank ICCAs**.

## Building Block 1: The integrity and strength of the custodian community

**Discussion Questions:**
- Does the community have a sense of **common identity and shared values**?
- Are there specific **events, ceremonies, activities or mechanisms that appear to keep alive and strengthen that common identity and internal solidarity**?
- Does this differ across groups – e.g., men and women, elders and young people, ethnic minorities, livelihood type, wealth or language groups?
- Is the community **able to develop an internal consensus** about important issues affecting its life and territory, and convey that effectively to the appropriate counterparts?
- Does the community see any worrying or positive **trends in terms of its overall integrity, sense of mutual connection and responsibility for its territory**?

**Discussion notes** (What key issues were identified?):

| Key Question 1: To what extent do people in the community feel connected with and responsible for one another? | Group Answer: (description) | Summary score: (0 to 5 according to the scale below) |
|---|---|---|

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not at all | Just a little | Somewhat but this is degrading | Moderately, but dependably | Quite a lot, and increasing | Very much indeed! |

## Building Block 2: The connection between the community and its territory

**Discussion questions:**

- Does the community have a **long-standing and/or very solid relationship** with its ICCA?
- Are community members **aware** of their ICCA? Do they have a special name for it? Do they speak about it in affectionate terms? Do they think it is **important**? Are they **ready to protect it and defend it**, if needed?
- Does the community see any worrying or positive **trends** in terms of its overall **connection to and sense of responsibility for the ICCA**?
- Does this sense of connection differ across groups – e.g., men and women, elders and young people, ethnic minorities, livelihood type, wealth or language groups?
- Are the ICCA-related **knowledge, skills and relationships** being **passed on from the elders to the new generations**? Are those been deepened and enriched with time?

**Discussion notes** (What key issues were identified?):

| **Key Question 2:** **How strong is the community's sense of connection with its territory, the 'bond with the ICCA'?** | **Group Answer:** (description) | **Summary Score:** (0 to 5 according to the scale below) |
|---|---|---|

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inexistent | Quite weak | It is there but is degrading | It exists and is stable | It is strong and increasing | It is extremely powerful |

## Building Block 3: The functioning of the governance institution

**Discussion questions:**

- **Is there an institution** that makes decisions regarding the ICCA (e.g. rules of access and use)?
- Is the decision making institutions **legitimate** in the eyes of the community? Are community members in **solidarity** with the ICCA governance institution? Do they **respect its decisions and defend them, if need be**?
- Is the ICCA governance institution **capable of securing the implementation of its own decisions and rules**?
- Related to the preceding question, does the ICCA have **boundary demarcation?** Is the ICCA **mapped**? Is it **formally recognised in state law or reflected in any policy documents/national reports**?
- Does the community see any worrying or positive **trends** in terms of its overall **respect for** and **community engagement with ICCA governance**?
- Does this engagement differ across groups – e.g., men and women, elders and young people, ethnic minorities, livelihood type, wealth or language groups?

**Discussion notes** (What key issues were identified?):

| Key Question 3: How well is the ICCA governance institution functioning? | **Group Answer:** (description) | **Score:** (0 to 5 according to the scale below) |
|---|---|---|

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| It is not functioning | It is very weak | It is functioning, but degrading | It is functioning moderately well and is stable | It is functioning well and becoming stronger | It is an extremely powerful institution |

## Building Block 4: The territory's conservation status

**Discussion questions:**

- How 'healthy' are the **land, air, water and natural resources** of value to the community (e.g., air and soil quality; freshwater quality and quantity; abundance and health of endemic species; wildlife, fisheries…)?
- How healthy are, as relevant, the forests, dryland areas, watersheds, coastal areas and the **ecosystems** in general within the ICCA or in its vicinity?
- Does the community see any worrying or positive **trends** in terms of overall **ecological integrity and health** of the ICCA ecosystem(s)?
- What is the status and trend of the **key endemic species** (flora and fauna) in the ICCA? Are there any endemic species that appear to be especially thriving or declining in significant ways?
- Is the ICCA **landscape or seascape** aesthetically harmonious? If applicable, does it maintain its character and cultural, social, spiritual or religious values for the concerned peoples and community?

**Discussion notes** (What key issues were identified?):

| **Key Question 4: How healthy is nature in the ICCA?** | **Group Answer:** (description) | **Score:** (0 to 5 according to the scale below) |
|---|---|---|

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| It is extremely degraded | It is degraded | It is still OK, but the trend is not good | It is OK and stable | It is in a good state and improving | It is indeed thriving |

## Building Block 5: The livelihoods and wellbeing of the community

**Discussion questions:**

- How secure are material values associated with the ICCA, such as **food, water, housing and resources used for livelihoods or to generate income**?
- Is there any evidence of **increasing or decreasing poverty and inequality in the community**?
- How is the overall **health status of the community**?  Is there any relation between the health of the community and the presence and maintenance of the ICCA?
- How secure are the non-material values associated with the ICCA, such as **spiritual and cultural values, sense of satisfaction and well-being**?
- Is there any evidence of increasing or decreasing **pace of cultural change, emergence of new conflicts, crimes, disrespect of customary values**, migration phenomena, vandalism and self-destructive behaviour?
- Does this differ across groups – e.g., men and women, elders and young people, ethnic minorities, livelihood type, wealth or language groups?

**Discussion notes** (What key issues were identified?):

| Key Question 5: What is the general level of wellbeing in the community, especially for those whose livelihoods are directly connected to the ICCA? | Group Answer: (description) | | | | Summary score: (0 to 5 according to the scale below) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **0** It is extremely poor | **1** It is rather poor | **2** It is still OK, but the trend is not good | **3** It is OK and stable | **4** It is in a good state and improving | **5** It is indeed thriving |

## *Beyond scoring: community reflection and key indicators*

The Resilience and Security Tool for ICCAs is, essentially, a tool to help the community to identify, reflect upon and analyze the key issues and factors that affect their ICCA. As soon as appropriate, this reflection can be deepened to identify a number of **indicators** that may be followed through time (see Discussion questions 3.1). The grassroots discussions that may have started with the use of the Tool may be continued to identify at least **five variables**, and possibly more, that the community identifies as **crucial indicators of the five 'ICCA building blocks'**. The variables do not need to be quantitative (i.e., be measurable with a specific number). They could well be qualitative (i.e., be described by specific qualities) or mixed. What is important is that they are **accompanied by a clear description of how they are to be assessed, now and in the future**. This is usually referred to as '**monitoring protocol**' (see Module 5).

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### What do we mean by...?

An **indicator** is a variable that provides synthetic information – quantitative or qualitative– about a more complex phenomenon. Assessing an indicator usually offers rapid and revealing information about the larger phenomenon… even when the information remains limited/ incomplete (see also Module 5).

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### *Discussion questions 3.1 – Community reflection and key indicators*

- What are the **most important issues** that arose in the discussion/ assessment of the ICCA for each one of the 'building blocks'?

- If the Tool was used by diverse small groups in the community, are the 'scores' and identified key issues similar for all groups? If not, what are the main differences? What does that reveal?

- What are the **key elements of strength** of the ICCA? What can be done to build upon those? (Consider actions to take individually and as a community, and with or without supportive partners/ allies.)

- What are the most **serious internal and/or external weaknesses** of the ICCA? How could those be resolved or compensated for? (Consider actions to take individually and as a community, and with or without supportive partners/ allies.)

- Are there any **obvious trends** for the ICCA? For example, ecosystem restoration, out-migration or immigration, loss or increase of authority of the governance institution, impacts of climate change?

Taking account of the discussions in all groups, is there **at least one meaningful indicator** that the community can identify **for each of the five key entities analysed by the tool** (i.e., the integrity and strength of the custodian community; the connection between the community and its territory; the governance institution; the territory's conservation status; the livelihoods and well-being of the community)? Could those indicators be monitored through time?

Here the community can begin to identify what is "truly important" and figure out how to monitor positive or negative changes in it (see also Module 5). Monitoring is usually based on a set of indicators assessed through time and analysed at given intervals. The indicators need to be **valid** and **relevant**, i.e. measure what the community intends to measure. They also need to be **unambiguous** and **specific**, and as **simple** as possible... but also **sensitive** to the kind of change that the custodian community wishes to follow. In practice, it is difficult to identify perfect indicators, and the communities will need to make compromises, hopefully compensated by their own in-depth knowledge of the ecological and social issues at stake.

Table 3.1 includes as an example a set of indicators of the 'ICCA building blocks' that were identified by a specific custodian community and followed over time. They were developed under specific circumstances and cannot be simply applied elsewhere. Other indicators will need to be identified by other custodian communities to reflect their own circumstances (see more examples in Table 5.1)

| Table 3.1: Indicators chosen by a specific custodian community to monitor the 'building blocks' of its ICCA | |
|---|---|
| **Example indicator** | **Reflections on the quality of the indicator** |
| **ICCA building block: Integrity and strength of the custodian community** | |
| Number of **activities decided and carried out collectively and successfully** by the community in a given calendar year (e.g. refurbishing a local small dam, constructing the local school, replanting mangroves) | Good indicator... but neither precise nor very specific, as such activities could be demanded/ imposed by external circumstances. |
| **ICCA building block: Connection between the community and its territory** | |
| Number of **person/days worked as community volunteer** for the ICCA in a given time period | A good indicator that can be followed on a monthly basis; it is also possible to disaggregate it by village, by season, etc. |
| **ICCA building block: Functioning of the governance institution** | |
| **Number and severity of infractions** to the ICCA rules in a given year | Valid indicator, but neither precise nor specific, and at times of challenging interpretation (e.g. are infractions going up because governance is weakening, or because surveillance is improving? The indicator could be strengthened by coupling it with qualitative information about the nature of change). |
| **ICCA building block: Conservation status of the territory** | |
| **Quality and quantity of fish catch** assessed under careful conditions, in specific locations in the ICCA, at specific times in the fishing calendar and | Excellent complete set of indicators -- reliable, exhaustive and specific... but not simple or inexpensive to set up. Monitoring this requires |

| | |
|---|---|
| by using a standard gear dedicated to the purpose only | dedicated resources. |
| **ICCA building block: Livelihoods and wellbeing of the community** | |
| Average **monthly frequency of eating good quality fish** among all families in the village | Very meaningful but it can be laborious to determine if it is assessed by carrying out interviews with all households. A simpler option might be to hold focus groups or interview a smaller but representative cross-section of families to reveal meaningful trends. |
| Trends in local **in-migration and out-migration** of villagers/community members | Meaningful but difficult to determine without ambiguity, and often not precise because such movements can be the result of a wide number of reasons, including both increasing *and* decreasing wealth and livelihood opportunities. |

In a similar way, the custodian community may wish to identify indicators for the main elements of strength or weakness of the ICCA:

| Table 3.2: Examples of indicators to reveal main strengths/ weaknesses of the ICCA | |
|---|---|
| **Example indicator** | **Reflections on the quality of the indicator** |
| **Recognition by government authorities** (municipality, region, representatives of central government) | Valid, crucially important and relatively easy to assess |
| **Social awareness** of the ICCA in the custodian community and beyond | Valid and crucially important, requires a dedicated effort to assess |
| Availability of **human and financial resources** to support surveillance operations | Valid, crucially important and relatively easy to assess |

## Resources and tools to support assessment and analysis

**Methods:**

*(Prioritize any customary or locally familiar methods)*

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis

Well-being self-assessments (see Shrumm and Jonas 2012)

**Websites:**

Governance assessment portal (GAP)

**Publications:**

*Governance of Protected Areas: From understanding to action*—*in particular Part II and the Annexes*

*What makes a good governance indicator?*

*Assessing forest governance: A Practical Guide to Data Collection, Analysis, and Use*

*Indicators for Human Rights Based Approaches to Development in UNDP Programming: A Users' Guide*

*Gender Indicators: What, Why and How?*

*From the Roots Up: Strengthening Organizational Capacity through Guided Self-Assessment*

**See also relevant resources and tools from Module 2** *(small and large group discussions and trend analysis / mapping)*

# Module 4— Developing initiatives in support of the ICCA

This Module focuses on:

- designing **specific initiatives** to pursue agreed priorities for action
- developing **projects proposals, as necessary**, to enable such initiatives

Through enhanced self-awareness and analysis, and/or as a result of communication and connections with others, a custodian community may have a clear sense of its vision for the ICCA and the objectives it needs to meet for that to be possible. For instance, it may need to stop a mining industry from entering the ICCA, enhance its surveillance operations or obtain greater tenure security. As part of one or more grassroots discussions, such goals could be explored, analyzed and planned for.

## *Towards appropriate initiatives in support of ICCAs*

Facilitators may assist custodian communities in identifying priority initiatives in support of their ICCA. As with all steps in this process, this should be community defined and controlled, and no action should be taken without explicit FPIC. The path from broadly agreed goals to specific objectives, activities and outcomes (i.e., a defined initiative) is not always straightforward, however, and facilitation for that may be quite helpful.

Discussion questions 4.1 explore the basic information a community should consider when designing a specific initiative. Many of the answers to the questions may have been discussed in prior meetings and would just need to be recalled and validated.

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### *Discussion questions 4.1– From description to action*

**Status**
- What is the current situation of the ICCA?
- Is the ICCA well-defined, disrupted, or desired? If it is not yet well-defined, is there a clear way it could become so?
- If **specific problems** exist, what are the **causes** and the **consequences** of such problems? Can those problems be tackled by the custodian community?

**Tenure / access / autonomy**
- Is there customary and statutory recognition of the community's **collective rights and responsibilities** to govern the territory? If yes, what kind of recognition is this? If not, how is the territory classified – by whom and for what?
- Do external actors **recognize / respect** the community's collective rights and responsibilities and the ICCA rules in practice? Are there significant **conflicts** over land tenure and use of natural resources? If yes, what can be done about that?
- Is the community involved in any broad **network, partnership or alliance** related to the governance and management of its territory/ ICCA?

- Has the community ever engaged in outreach and **advocacy**?  What has it learned in the process?


### Threats and opportunities

- Do you believe the ICCA is currently facing any **threats**? Do you see any threats as emerging?
- Would such threats have different implications for different groups in the community, such as women, elders, young people, ethnic minorities or certain livelihood groups?
- What **indicators** would be able to provide you with useful information about the threats and their change through time?
- Do you believe the ICCA is currently facing any **opportunities**? Do you see any new opportunities emerging?
- Would such opportunities have different implications for different groups in the community, such as women, elders, young people, ethnic minorities or certain livelihood groups?
- What **indicators** would be able to provide you with useful information about the opportunities and their change through time?


### Objectives and activities

- Has the community ever **taken action** to 'save' its ICCA from a threat?
  *[Consider internal and external threats or problems for the ICCA, from a natural disaster to a plan to cut a road across it]*
- If yes, what happened?  Did the whole community take action on that, or only a few people?  Was that appropriate?  Did this response work? Why or why not?
- Has the community ever **taken action** in response to a new opportunity for the ICCA?
  *[Consider internal and external opportunities, such as new supporting legislation, politically favourable climate to obtain the recognition of formal collective rights, availability of project support, etc.]*
- If yes, what happened?  Did anyone in the community take action, or only a few? Was that appropriate?  Did this response work? Why or why not?
- What are the **vision** and **long term goal** of the community with regard to the ICCA?
- What objectives the community wishes to meet to secure the goal? In other words, what **strategic directions** has the community decided to take?
- What activities are needed to reach the objectives?
- What is the community ready to do, *as a community,* to meet its own vision and goal?
- Are any members of the community ready to take responsibility for any of the specific activities to be carried out?


Appropriate initiatives in support of the ICCAs should be identified by the custodian communities and not assumed or 'pushed' by the SSP facilitators. No one, however, should be obliged to reinvent the wheel.  In most case, communities wish first and foremost to obtain **security of tenure** and clear **collective rights and responsibilities** to govern and manage their territory.  They wish that their **governance institutions and rules** are properly **recognized and respected** and that damaging conflicts are prevented. How they go about achieving all that is very much dependent on their capacities and the context at stake. In different circumstance, different initiatives have been tried out and the Guidance to the self-strengthening process compiled in this document was developed from lessons learned in diverse attempts in practice.

## Examples of initiatives in support of ICCAs

(provided by ICCA Consortium Members and Honorary members from various regions, January 2015[33])

- Initiatives to **self-assess and enhance ICCA governance processes and capacities**– including leadership development experiences and training on managerial, technical and financial skills for the members of the ICCA governing institutions— in particular for indigenous peoples, women and youth

- Initiatives to **self-assess and enhance ICCA management processes and capacities**– including specific training and means to carry out surveillance and enforcement of rules, prevention and mitigation of human-wildlife conflicts, habitat restoration where necessary, disaster prevention activities, monitoring and analyses of management results

- Active **exchanges and collaboration among ICCA custodian communities and partners**—including knowledge exchanges and joint learning, dialogues, symposia, study groups and open discussions of CBD reports

- **Legal advice and support** to respond to ICCA-specific issues and cases, including via ICCA Alerts and capacity building for **enhanced legal literacy and para-legal training** among custodian communities, to halt undesired and damaging initiatives and to prevent violence against the opponents of such initiatives, and to promote **dispute resolution and redress**, including in cases of overlaps between ICCAs and protected areas

- Initiatives to promote the **establishment and functioning of ICCA networks**, including by ICCA inventories in a given region, meetings among representatives of custodian communities, formal registration of organisations (as needed)

- Support to **communication campaigns,** including via provision of specific equipment or purchased radio time, **advocacy campaigns** and campaigns to respond to threats

- Initiatives to **strengthen the links between ICCAs, food sovereignty, well-being and local wealth generation** (e.g., communication campaigns to uplift and de-criminalise local livelihoods and economies for practices such as seed exchange, rotational agriculture)

- **Initiatives to reduce the risk of natural disasters and adapt to climate change**, e.g., by combining local and non-local knowledge and skills to improve the management of the ICCA

- Initiatives to **strengthen community pride in ICCAs,** keeping alive the **cultural, non-economic values that sustain ICCAs** and resisting simplified narratives of 'development' (e.g., recording and highlighting traditional knowledge, skills, practices and art forms, setting up competitions and awards about them and their innovative uses, encouraging continuation and respectful innovation in celebrations, story-telling, cultural events, ceremonies, pilgrimages, rituals related to ICCAs, photo-stories and video-stories, etc.),

- **Bi-cultural educational curricula and classes** in ICCA custodian communities, with flexible schedules to make sure that the cultural values that sustain the ICCAs are maintained among the youth

- **Community funds** and **specific support** to **collective investments and sustainable productive activities in the natural commons**, making sure those financial flows are transparent, assessable and aligned with local priorities

## *Towards coherent project proposals*

Once the ICCA initiative to be taken forward by the custodian community (or group of custodian communities) is clear, the community may determine that it can implement it *without* external support. As discussed throughout this document, **autonomous community care and strengthening of ICCAs** has long been the norm and remains the best way to promote self-reliance and independence for the community.

If the initiative requires support from outside, the facilitator may help to identify specific collaborators, supporters and donors. First potential partners to be considered should be other communities, to promote mutual solidarity and support. It may be the case, however, that what is needed is financial support, and other communities may be unable to provide it.  In such a case, a project proposal would have to be developed to articulate the community needs, and chances are that the proposal will deal with one or more of the five ICCA building blocks described in Module 3. The community will thus be required to identify some relevant indicators and measure them through time to assess results and impact (see Module 5). In this sense, there will be coherence between the documentation collected so far, the overall self-strengthening process and the proposal in support of ICCA to be developed.

The ICCA Global Support Initiative (GSI) implemented by UNDP GEF SGP during its Operational Phase 6 welcomes project proposals in support of ICCAs.  ICCA-dedicated grants are available for the purpose in 26 pilot countries. In *all 132* countries where GEF SGP operates, however, its mandate is well served by initiatives in support of ICCAs conceived by their custodian communities.  The analysis of the ICCA building blocks and the use of the Resilience and Security Tool for ICCAs are broadly useful well beyond GSI.

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### *Discussion questions 4.2– Community engagement and needed resources*

- Does the community have sufficient **capacity** to reach the goal and objectives it has set out to achieve?   For instance, who is capable and ready to **manage the initiative**?

- Does the community have the capacity to dedicate substantial **time** to specific tasks, to use relevant **technologies** (e.g., computers, electronic cameras, GPS), to manage and report about **financial resources**, and to **communicate** about the governance and management of the ICCA and its own attempts to respond to problems, threats and opportunities?

- What types of support or engagement does it need from external allies /partners, if any?

- What technical, human and financial resources does the community need?

- Is it possible to seek any of that?  How?

- How is the community willing to engage in the initiative and **take responsibility for its results and accomplishments**?

## Resources and tools for planning appropriate initiatives in support of ICCAs

**Methods:**

Problem Tree Analysis to understand root causes (see Mayer et al. 2013:36)

Appreciative Inquiry - asking 'what is working and how can we build on it?' (see AI website)

Stakeholder accounts (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997:158)

Facilitated brainstorming and options ranking (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997:150)

Negotiation / mediation (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997:153-156)

Current and future scenario mapping/ visualization and analysis (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997:139 and Mayers et al. 2013:35)

Theory of change analysis (see Mayer et al. 2013:37)

Capacity assessment

Proposal writing workshops/ exchanges

**Websites / online resources:**

Resources and guidance for developing Biocultural Community Protocols

Resources and guidance for developing project proposals (including example from UNESCO)

GEF Small Grants Programme (including page on how to apply)

**Publications:**

*Toolkit for indigenous peoples and local communities who manage and govern their conservation areas*

*Presentation on 'Is this a good ICCA initiative?'*

*Legal literacy camps*

*Community-based forest resource conflict management: training package, Vol.1 and Vol. 2*

*Field guide to conflict analysis. Negotiation and mediation techniques for natural resource management*

*Improving governance of forest tenure: a practical guide*

**See also relevant resources and tools from previous Modules** (e.g., small and large group discussions, participatory GIS/ mapping, brainstorming and prioritization exercises, situation analysis, problem tree analysis, etc.)

# Module 5— Self-monitoring for on-going learning and action

This Module focuses on:

- monitoring **outcomes and impacts** of any initiative implemented in support of ICCAs
- monitoring **progress in ICCA resilience and security**
- monitoring **progress in ICCA governance quality and vitality**
- learning how to **respond to change** towards the community vision and life plan

## *Orienting monitoring*

Monitoring can help the community to identify progress, as well as new challenges and opportunities, at different points in time. For self-awareness, for good practice and to respond to the reporting needs of UNDP GEF SGP and GSI (in case GSI support has been requested and received), any specific process or initiative in support of an ICCA should include a monitoring component. **Monitoring change**, however, does not need to happen only when an outside agency supports the custodian community. On the contrary, it is important to monitor change for general self-awareness/ risk management and to learn about the results of any self-strengthening process. The collection and analysis of monitoring information is, in itself, a **powerful source of strengthening.**

> Mexico: understanding what food sovereignty is and whether it has a relationship with the presence of an ICCA – a community initiated research initiative in Calakmul, Yucatan …. (details to be included)

While this Module is presented separately and one or more specific grassroots discussion about monitoring are usually needed, in practice discussions about the indicators to be used to monitor progress will have already taken place as part of the analysis of ICCA resilience and security (Module 3), the definition of the vision, goal, objectives and activities of any initiative that the community decides to pursue (Module 4) and the decisions about communication (Module 6) and any networking and advocacy (Module 7).

Monitoring can be coordinated by the Local Team, possibly with the support of the facilitator. It is desirable, however, that the entire custodian community is broadly involved in monitoring, or at least regularly informed of the monitoring process and on-going results. Grassroots discussions can be called to identify the key indicators to be monitored and to discuss the monitoring results (see Discussion questions 5.1). If the community has received support from GEF SGP as part of the Global Support Initiative and needs to provide an interim or final report, such reports normally include information on a variety of indicators for the expected outputs and impact that should be examined by the community at large before being submitted. Those indicators that are not directly relevant for ICCAs will not be discussed here.

Monitoring is usually based on indicators assessed through time and analysed at given intervals. As already noted in Module 3, such **indicators** need to be **valid, relevant**, **specific**, **simple and sensitive** to the kind of change that the custodian community wishes to follow. A few indicators of the 'building blocks of an ICCA' that could be followed through time by a custodian community were offered in Table 3.1. More examples are offered in Table 5.1 below. Each community will ultimately have to develop a set of indicators that makes sense for its own context.

## Table 5.1: Further examples of indicators to monitor the 'building blocks' of an ICCA

| Example indicator | Reflections on the quality of the indicator |
|---|---|
| **ICCA building block: Integrity and strength of the custodian community** | |
| Capacity of the community to **speak with one voice** | A valid indicator… but rather difficult to assess |
| Frequency, attendance, and expressed enthusiasm for **community cultural events and celebrations** | Relatively easy to assess, but it is not very precise or specific as people may participate for many reasons |
| Number of people, from different families and groups, who **help one another** in times of need | May be a valid indicator if it is relevant to the community's norms, but possibly poorly precise, difficult to assess |
| Number and severity of **intra-community conflicts**, particularly regarding the ICCA | A valid indicator, relatively easily assessed with focus groups, interviews, or discussions at normal community gatherings but likely not sensitive or precise |
| Expressed level of **sense of common identity, connection, solidarity** to 'one another' and 'being part of a community'. | Can be relatively easily assessed with focus groups, interviews, or discussions at normal community gatherings, though responses are subjective and depend on cultural norms |
| **ICCA building block: Connection between the community and its territory** | |
| Percentage of people in the community who can **name and describe at least 10 different features** or sub sites within the ICCA | A good indicator, and not too difficult to measure, but not clear how valid it may be – i.e. whether it is measuring what it is intended to measure… |
| Number/percentage of people from across community groups who participate in **efforts to 'defend' ICCA** when it is under threat | A very valid indicator, and not too difficult to measure. It may not be particularly precise, however, as participation may vary based on various factors (severity of threat, accessibility of the response measures, etc.) |
| Frequency, attendance, and expressed enthusiasm for community **cultural events and celebrations specific to the ICCA** | Relatively easy to assess, but it is not very precise or specific as people may participate for many reasons |
| Frequency, attendance, and expressed enthusiasm for opportunities for **inter-generational learning about the ICCA**, e.g., meetings between elders and youth | Relatively easy to assess, possibly not precise or specific as people may participate for many reasons |
| Expressed level of **sense of connection** to the ICCA | Can be relatively easily assessed with focus groups, interviews, or discussions at normal community gatherings, though responses are subjective and depend on cultural norms |
| **ICCA building block: Functioning of the governance institution** | |
| Number of serious intra-community conflicts | Valid result indicator, although not very precise |

| related to the use of natural resources in the ICCA | or specific. It could be strengthened by coupling it with qualitative information about the nature of the conflicts. Are they arising because of efforts to improve governance? Or because governance is weakening? |
|---|---|
| Demonstrated capacity make take **decisions under stress** | Valid indicator, but not precise and at times impossible to measure |
| Degree to which / ease with which community members can get **information** (documentation, description) about the ICCA from its governing institution. | Can be relatively easily assessed with focus groups, interviews, or discussions at normal community gatherings, though responses are subjective. |
| Degree to which institution has been able to effectively **respond to threats** / problems arising for the ICCA over a given period of time. | Valid indicator, relatively easily assessed with focus groups, interviews, or discussions at normal community gatherings, though responses are subjective and thus precision is low. |
| Expressed level of **perceived legitimacy** of the governing institution. | Can be relatively easily assessed with focus groups, interviews, or discussions at normal community gatherings, though responses are subjective and depend on cultural norms |
| **Funding procured** by the governing institution to support ongoing surveillance operations | Valid and easy to assess indicator, but highly dependent on circumstances |
| Number of people taking an **active role** in the function of the governance institution, and capacity of the institution to **renew** itself | Relatively easy to assess especially if the monitoring protocol is clear |
| **ICCA building block: Conservation status of the territory** | |
| **Quality and quantity of endemic plants** important to the community | Valid indicator if the protocol is carefully developed and followed |
| Number of **sights of an endangered animal species** under controlled conditions | Valid indicator if the protocol is carefully developed and followed |
| **Trends in water quality** measured under controlled conditions | Valid indicator if the protocol is carefully developed and followed |
| **ICCA building block: Livelihoods and wellbeing of the community** | |
| **Child nutritional status** | Meaningful indicator but requires expert support to develop the measuring protocol. It may also difficult to know, without additional information, how much the ICCA specifically is impacting any change in child nutrition. |
| Percentage of people who feel largely or fully **satisfied** with their life | Valid indicator, but may be laborious to assess and biases can be easily introduced in the measuring protocol. It may also difficult to know, without additional information, how much the ICCA specifically is impacting this sense of wellbeing. |

## *Focusing on governance and meaning*

Among the basic indicators that describe the building blocks of an ICCA and arguably relate to its resilience and security, possibly the least intuitive but crucially important are those regarding its governance institution. There are countless types of institutions that govern ICCAs, as complex and varied as human cultures. But the challenge is less daunting than one may think, as those institutions should be examined *from within,* by the very communities that determined them and know them best.

A "**governance institution**" for an ICCA includes one or more **social organisations** (e.g., a community general assembly, a council of elders or a municipal council) as well as a system of **values** and **processes at play when the organisation takes decisions about the ICCA** and **makes sure that those decisions are implemented**. The attributes of governance that go under the name of 'type', 'quality' and 'vitality' provide some help in describing this.

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**What do we mean by…?**

**Governance type** refers to <u>who</u> takes, and is engaged to implement, the fundamental decisions about a protected or conserved area. The IUCN and CBD distinguish among four main types: A: governance by government; B. shared governance (diverse rightsholders and stakeholders together); C: governance by private actors; D: governance by indigenous peoples and/or local communities. **By definition, the governance type for an ICCA is D.** When we find a variety of governance types for conservation in a given landscape/ seascape we speak of **governance diversity.**

**Governance quality** concerns whether decisions are made in ways that respect the **principles** seen by the community as valuable/ desirable. (Some possible principles are: legitimacy and voice, vision, performance, accountability, fairness and respect of rights.)

**Governance vitality** concerns whether the **decision-making actors and institution** are **functional**, **responsive** and **thriving**, meeting their roles and responsibilities in **timely** and **appropriate** ways.[34] This may be related to the integration and connectivity of the governance institution, its capacity to adapt and learn, its wisdom, innovation and creativity and capacity to assume responsibility in line with its authority.

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A custodian community can describe for itself the way in which it takes and implements decisions with regard to the ICCA and examine whether its **governing institution is functioning well** and responding to its needs. Ideally, the discussion will result in an agreement about **at least one indicator**, which may not represent all the important attributes of a governing institution, but will reflect a few that are particularly valued by the community. For instance, a chosen indicator may be "*engagement of all community clans during the annual general assembly that takes the key decisions about the ICCA*". The indicator can be assessed by noting a combination of qualitative and quantitative aspects, including whether *all* clans are there, whether they are represented by elders and/or young adults, whether women participate in developing the decisions, whether the discussions are constructive and serious or confused and futile, etc.

The important points are that:
- the indicator is perceived by the community as **meaningful** (valid)**,** i.e., reflecting whether the governance institution is or is not functioning well
- the changes it undergoes through time are **not trivial but telling** about the governance of the ICCA
- everyone has clarity about *how* **the indicator will be assessed**—which is referred to as **monitoring protocol**. For instance, would only the presence of an elder, or even a youngster, from a clan mean that they are represented?  What if the person leaves very soon after the start of the meeting?  What if a conflict ensues?  Who will actually note all this down and keep the notebook?  These may sound like trivial details but they are important if the indicator is to be correctly monitored through time.

Every custodian community should be able to identify at least one and possibly more **indicators at the heart of the good functioning of its ICCA governing institution**, and capable of showing whether that heart is actually beating. Discussion questions 5.2 provide some considerations about that and introduce issues of governance quality and vitality.

Beyond functioning per se, it is important to assess the results of that functioning, in particular the **capacity of the institution to respond** in a positive, effective and equitable way **to the threats and opportunities** faced by the ICCA and, ultimately, to **contribute to the vision and life plan**  identified by the custodian community. These are among the most crucial questions and all indicators identified so far should inform the community about this.  This is the actual **meaning** of monitoring, and **of the self-strengthening process in general**.

## *Discussion questions 5.1-- Exploring governance quality and vitality*

### Vision/ voice/ accountability
- Is there a clear and shared vision and course of action for the ICCA?
- Are threats and opportunities timely recognised?  Are they provided effective and equitable responses?
- Does the community maintain documentation about the ICCA and its governance and management practices?
- Do community members have access to information, including financial accounting?
- Do they feel free and able to talk about ICCA governance and management issues?
- Does this differ across groups – e.g., men and women, elders and young people, ethnic minorities or language groups?

### Fairness/ learning/ wisdom
- Are people respected and treated with dignity as part of ICCA decision making, enforcement and management processes?  Does this differ across groups – e.g., men and women, elders and young people, ethnic minorities or language groups?
- Can decision-making processes and the enforcement of rules for the ICCA be made fairer and more intelligent and effective, for instance by learning from the history of nature and the history of the community in the particular location?
- Do the decisions about the ICCA impact the diverse members of the community differently?  Are some individuals or households negatively impacted with regard to their livelihoods, health or personal security?
- Could the community try better ways of engaging more people and ideas, managing and resolving conflicts and disputes, avoiding waste, caring more for nature and the future generations? If so, in which ways?

### Legitimacy/ leadership/ responsibility
- Is the ICCA governance institution broadly accepted and appreciated by the community?
- Does it govern the ICCA with energy, commitment, impartiality, goodwill, courage and/or other culturally important values?
- Can it count on strong/ committed leaders or 'champions' of the ICCA ready to take-on formal or informal responsibilities?

### Performance/ connectivity/ learning and innovation
- Is the ICCA well conserved?  Does it contribute to sustainable livelihoods?  Does it contribute to maintaining the cultural heritage and sense-of-self of the community? Does it contribute to the community's self-determination and the enjoyment of collective rights and responsibilities?
- Are there clear values, rules and ways of caring for the ICCA known within the communities and by external actors?
- Is local socio-ecological history incorporated in the vision / decisions about the ICCA?
- Can ICCA management practices be meaningfully and rapidly changed when needs arise?
- Are new knowledge, experience, learning and proper responses to threats and opportunities incorporated into the vision and decisions about the ICCA?
- Is the ICCA effectively contributing to the vision and life plan of the community?

## *Learning about change*

In the best of cases, monitoring goes well beyond measuring and accounting of specific parameters and develops into an ambitious process of **self-reflection and "learning about change"**. But assessing and monitoring phenomena as complex as the "connection between a community and its territory" is a challenging exercise. For instance, a given identified change let us say diminished number of person/days dedicated to voluntary ICCA surveillance— may signal a concern (e.g., disaffection, conflicts) that needs to be addressed. But the same change may also relate to increased community awareness and respect of the rules by insiders and outsiders, or to a positive change in other parameters, such as engagement of government agencies in enforcing community rules. In other words, the 'ups' and 'downs' in indicators relate to multiple interplaying 'causes' and need to be interpreted carefully and not hastily as part of broad patters of change in the environment and society.

With all the above in mind, at any appropriate time in the self-strengthening process the following questions could be used to develop a **monitoring and evaluation (M&E) protocol**. The protocol should include a set of indicators (each accompanied by clear notes regarding who, when and how will measure and assess them) and a plan for drawing lessons about change from the information collected.

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## *Discussion Questions 5.2 – Setting up the M&E protocol*

- Is the community willing and ready to engage in monitoring and evaluating change with regard to the ICCA and itself as custodian? **Why?** What does it expect from that?

- What are **meaningful indicators <u>for</u> the <u>specific ICCA</u> to monitor change** through time?
Through the use of the Resilience and Security Tool for ICCAs and via the subsequent reflection the community should have identified **at least five indicators for the 'ICCA building blocks'**:

- integrity and strength of the custodian community
- connection between the community and its territory
- functioning of the ICCA governance institution
- conservation status of the territory
- livelihoods and well-being of the community

Has the community also identified indicators for its own identified **weaknesses and/or strengths, and for the threats and opportunities** the ICCA may face? If yes, which ones? If not, can this be arranged?

If the community has also planned one or more **specific initiatives in support of ICCAs**, which indicators are to reveal progress in those?

Will it be helpful to follow any other indicators, in particular regarding the capacity of the governance institution to **respond to threats and opportunities** and about the **capacity of the ICCA to contribute to the community's vision and life plan**?

Is the community already **taking note of change** in some indicators? If yes, how? If not, can this be arranged?

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**Who** participates or could participate in monitoring? Is there a community group willing to take on this role?  Are dedicated **resources** (time, financial support, training, etc.) needed and available?

How is the wider community able to **check the monitoring results** and participate in **interpreting their meaning**?  How will others, outside the community, be informed?

Who is expected to **compile** the monitoring results**?**  Who is expected to **discuss and interpret** them, **draw lessons from them** and make sure that the **lessons are acted upon**?

As part of the M&E protocol, the Local Team and facilitator may wish to re-visit Module 3 at regular times (e.g. once every two years, once a year, or even more frequently). They will thus use again the simplified Resilience and Security Tool, calculate the scores (if desired) and identify the key issues and main weaknesses, strengths, threats and opportunities as they will emerge in the discussion. The community will then assess the indicators identified for the five 'ICCA building blocks' as well as any other indicator listed in the M&E protocol. Information that is important and useful for the community can also be provided by external or peer assessments and evaluations, if done in appropriate ways and with FPIC.

All assessment results should be compared with the original baseline data and previous assessments. In turn, the results of the comparison should be interpreted and used to guide new learning and action. There is always much to learn from monitoring and understanding change!

## *Discussion Questions 5.3 – Learning for action*

- What **changes** are **revealed** from monitoring the indicators identified by the Resilience and Security Tool and beyond?

- Are there **perceivable trends** in the indicators of the "ICCA building blocks", in the custodian community's main perceived strengths and weaknesses, and in the threats and opportunities they face?

- **Do the changes make sense** to the community, i.e. are their root causes and likely consequences clear? *(Consider that change may be interpreted differently by different people  )*

- Is the **community getting better or weaker at responding to threats and opportunities**?  Is the ICCA effectively **contributing to** the community's **vision and life plan**?

- How might the custodian community better respond to the issues, changes and trends it has identified?

- Does the custodian community see any **clear direction for action**?  In particular, does it wish to set up **new initiatives** to respond to specific issues?  Does it wish to **better communicate** about its ICCA?  Does it wish to **seek partners and allies**?  Does it wish to **advocate for change in policy and practice**?

*Resources and tools for ongoing monitoring and learning*

**Methods:**
*(Prioritize any customary or locally familiar methods)*
Creating a public repository of information about the ICCA and the SSP (see Effective Engagement Toolkit)
Establishing learning groups/ study circles (see Mayers et al. 2013:57, Mayers et al. 2009, and Effective Engagement Toolkit)
Public Hearing (/Public Audit) (see Hariyo Ban Program Internal Governance Tool 1)

**Websites:**
The Monitoring Matters Network

Extreme Citizen Science

GREEN Mekong Equity Resource Kit

**Publications:**
*Basic Course on Community-Based Monitoring and Information Systems (CBMIS)*

*Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results*

*Monitoring government policies: a toolkit for civil society organizations*

*Outcome mapping: A method for tracking behavioural changes in development programs*

*Public hearing and public auditing in the community forestry user groups: a summary of process, outcomes and lessons learned from the SAGUN programme in Nepal*

*Fostering Social Accountability: From Principle to Practice*

*Gender Equality and Justice Programming: Equitable Access to Justice for Women*

**See also relevant resources and tools from previous Modules (e.g., small and large group discussions, mapping, trend analysis, sketch interviews, transect walks, brainstorming and prioritization exercises, problem-tree analysis, situation analysis, etc.)**

# Module 6— Communicating about the ICCA

This Module focuses on:

- **communicating about ICCAs at various levels** – local, landscape, national and international

Effective communication— internal and external— is a powerful component of a self-empowerment process for an individual ICCA, but also for ICCAs generally. The *process* of developing and discussing what and how to communicate is an avenue for self-awareness, bonding and good governance. And the *practice* and *results* of communication activities generate important connections and support.

## *The many reasons to communicate*

A custodian community may wish to communicate about its conserved territory or area for many reasons. On the one hand, it may wish to reinforce **internal awareness** of its own values, principles and rules, promoting learning and continuity in the younger generations. As part of that, communication breeds transparency, accountability, legitimacy and voice—all vital components of **good governance**. On the other hand, the custodian community may wish to **inform** others **of its presence, action and customary and legal rights and responsibilities**. As a result, it may expect those to be better recognized, supported and respected. And it may extend a hand to other communities, seeking to inform and **inspire** them, but also **hear from** them, **discover similarities** with what they do… and ultimately **collaborate** towards better resilience and security for everyone's ICCAs.

ICCAs are many, diverse and scattered around the world. Usually, their custodian communities focus on pressing local issues and have little time for broader organising. Yet many of them confront the same challenges and might benefit from joining forces and sharing analyses and strategies, particularly at the national level. The threats they face (e.g., detrimental laws, market pressures, destructive industries, climate change) and also some of the opportunities (e.g., knowledge exchange, supportive policies, technical advice, funding resources) are usually similar. In any given country, greater self-awareness and mutual awareness may be just what is needed for a **critical mass of support and action** to emerge in support of ICCAs.

**Communication approaches need to engage the custodian community with timing, methods and formats that work for each specific context and community objectives**. Some material may already exist, e.g., a map of the community territory, and can just be further shared and discussed in appropriate forums. Usually, however, new material needs to be gathered or generated as part of the SSP, building upon the results of prior work describing, documenting, assessing and analyzing the ICCA (Module 2 and 3). An ad-hoc Communication Team, possibly including one or more members of the Local Team accompanying the SSP, should coordinate the communication efforts, working with the community's objectives and audience in mind. The facilitators can provide technical support as requested.

## *Discussion questions 6.1 – Orienting communications*

- **Why** does the community want to share information about the ICCA? Who are the **audiences** and what are the **objectives**? Does the community wish to communicate mostly internally or externally to others? Does it wish to inform/ influence/ change some actors or policies in particular? Is the aim to open channels for **mutual communication and support**? Are there multiple audiences and objectives?
  - *[ Consider that the community may wish to communicate:*
  - ✓ *Internally – e.g., celebrating the relationship with the territory and enhancing respect and compliance to the rules, as well as interest and energy for the care of the ICCA across generations; enhancing community self-awareness, transparency and accountability*
  - ✓ *Across the landscape – e.g., raising awareness about the ICCA, including to help coordination with and respect from other ICCA custodians and users*
  - ✓ *At the national and/or international level – e.g., helping to ensure appropriate recognition and support for the specific ICCA and/or helping to raise awareness about and support for ICCAs in general, including by communicating about their importance in sustaining ecosystem functions and protecting biodiversity*
  - ✓ *With ICCA networks and among other custodian communities – e.g., raising awareness and building solidarity, mutual learning and support ]*

- **What specific information or "story" does the community wish to share?** For example, is it about the ICCA's meaning for the community? Its values and factors of strength? The community's ways of caring for their ICCA? The community's way of making and enforcing decisions about it? The threats the ICCA faces, and the community responses to such threats? The opportunities that could be seized together with other communities?

- **How (in what formats and spaces) would the community like to share the information or story?**
  - *[Some ideas include:*
  - ✓ *Organizing exchanges, celebrations, meetings and ceremonies within the community and among neighbouring communities, including inside the ICCA. Such events can bring together different generations.*
  - ✓ *Taking pilgrimages and travelling within the ICCA or to visit other ICCAs*
  - ✓ *Developing and diffusing radio or theatre programmes*
  - ✓ *Creating ICCA-related songs and music, and competitions about those*
  - ✓ *Creating an ICCA video or photo-story and uploading to the Internet and social media*
  - ✓ *Diffusing interviews and information via newspapers, radio, television and social media*
  - ✓ *Writing leaflets, articles, books or posters]*

- **Are there risks** in sharing information about the ICCA? Might that bring harm or exacerbate conflicts or threats for individuals and/or the custodian community? **How can such risks be avoided or minimised**?

- **Are there opportunities** in sharing information about the ICCA? Might that bring enhanced support and security for the ICCA and the custodian community? **How can those be optimised**?

- Within the community, who can contribute to communication efforts? How?

- Is there a need for external support? Specifically about what?

## Resources and tools for communicating about the ICCA

**Methods:**
*(Prioritize any customary or locally familiar methods)*

Social communication (see Borrini-Feyerabend with Buchan 1997: 121-129)

Community theatre, song, dance to celebrate and communicate about the ICCA

Radio, social media and text messaging services to communicate information and receive feedback

Photo and video stories

Newspaper articles

Public speaking

Community hearings / testimonials with government bodies and others (see community climate hearing in Tanzania)

**Websites and online resources:**
Territories of life
Example photo-stories from ICCA custodians – e.g.,

- Introduction to a Photostory process in India

- Making a Photostory in India

- Making of a Photo-story in Cambodia

Questions for a Photo story (in general)

Draft methodology for 'Threats to ICCAs and community responses—facilitating grassroots analyses and the development of a Photo Story'.

Toolkit for creating an online community

**Publications:**
*Insights into participatory video: a handbook for the field*

*Conservation Theatre: Mirroring Experiences and Performing Stories in Community Management of Natural Resources*

*REFORM Toolkit: Expanding Access to Information*

***See also relevant resources and tools from Module 1** (social communication)* ***and Module 2** (photo-stories and participatory mapping)*

# Module 7— Networking and advocating for appropriate recognition and support

This Module focuses on:

- **networking** among custodian communities and partners
- learning about **international recognition of ICCAs**
- assessing what is possible and available under **national law and policy**
- **registering** ICCAs internationally or nationally
- engaging in **advocacy** for *appropriate* **types of ICCA recognition and support**

## *ICCA networking and peer support*

Acting alone, a community can rarely affect the power systems that regulate legal and policy options for ICCA recognition and support. Communities are thus encouraged **to develop links and purposeful alliances with other communities and partners**. Even seeking international registration by UNEP WCMC (see below) requires the existence of a national ICCA network and peer review mechanism. In this sense, communities should go *beyond* self-strengthening and **engage in mutual strengthening**.

Communities determined to remain custodians of their ICCAs and to advocate for appropriate recognition and support should seek and reach-out to other communities. This may start by connecting with neighbouring communities or other indigenous peoples in the region. Over time, however, communities may find allies and peers in wider circles at the national and international level, as ICCAs exist in very diverse social, political and ecological environments throughout the world.

A key to effective alliance and mutual strengthening is often an **ICCA Network** — i.e., a group of individuals, communities and organizations concerned with ICCA-relevant policy and practices and ready to collaborate and provide each other with advice and peer support, as needed. The networks can be flexible and relatively informal, but may also be formal and designed to fit specific legislation. All networks should be able to benefit both individual communities and the network's overall goals.

The simplest and often least formal kind of network is a **working group**, where representatives of ICCAs, sympathetic organizations and individual activists and experts gather more or less regularly to share ideas and advice, and to work on common concerns. A **coalition** or **platform** is more formally dedicated to a common goal and can be especially useful when working on specific pressing issues - e.g., a coalition against an imminent threat of land grabbing or a platform in support of a specific national policy. Some ICCA custodian communities have also found it useful to create a formal organization, i.e., an **association** or **federation** that represents their common interests. This model allows the network to receive and use resources with larger horizons in mind. It also provides more formal representation when interacting with other actors, such as regional or national governments. The nature of the issues and the available human and organizational capacities inform the possible and desirable ICCA network in any given context. Today, there are examples of ICCA networks in many countries around the world.[35]

If an ICCA network does not yet exist in a specific country, an effective way to promote it is to organize a **meeting among representatives of ICCA custodian communities**. This creates an occasion to listen to each other's needs and ideas and establish some common ground, often on the basis of shared threats and opportunities. If the custodian communities and their partners identify common issues and

possible/ desirable joint activities, they may decide to develop some form of on-going collaboration as a network.

It is important that a network emerges from a felt need and from the bottom up. External pushing for the creation of a network is most likely to result in irrelevance and/or failure. At the same time, networking, alliance building and joint organizing are necessary if custodian communities wish to build up strength and momentum for effective advocacy. This is the case when communities advocate for change via the usual political and legislative process (e.g., via compelling arguments offered to administrators and legislators) as well as when they decide to carry out active protest (e.g., via demonstrations, marches, strikes, flash mobs and even civil disobedience).

The network is also necessary for **peer-review and support**, which is a requirement for international ICCA registration (see below). If desired and requested, the SSP facilitator can support ICCA network establishment, but such support should strive to enable the networking and advocacy to take place, while refraining from delving into the *content* or *methods* of any advocacy work.

> **Spain networking example here:** An ICCA Network born out of awareness of international policy in support to ICCAs that furthered national exchanges and mutual learning, developed its own registry process, etc. (Details to be included.)

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## Lessons learned in networking
(provided by ICCA Consortium Members and Honorary members from various regions, January 2017)

A GSI national strategic/ catalytic organisation wishing to promote an ICCA network should identify an initial small group of ICCA custodian communities and **facilitate their meeting and joint organising**… but it is up to *them* to decide if they want an ICCA network, to actually create/ establish that network and to define its strategy and operational functioning, its political vision, the support it needs and the achievements it seeks.

Networks do not need to start with large numbers of members.  But the **integrity and determination of the initial ICCA representatives are crucial** for the future of their collective work.

Federative processes need to evolve organically and not be externally motivated by specific projects or funding. At the most, external support should be provided to facilitate a meeting among ICCA representatives and initiate dialogue.

The above notwithstanding, even when the members of the network volunteer their time, the availability of **at least *some* resources are important** to sustain their meetings, analyses, communications and advocacy work. There is a need to support experience sharing, field-based research, exchange visits and ceremonies, topical dialogues, consultation, facilitation, coordination, capacity building, legal help and advocacy initiatives.

The network needs to be able to relate with the government administration and with technical and financial partners.

Networks should be **community-centred and demand driven**. People invest time into the things that are most useful to them. Consider that people have economic and social needs but also cultural and spiritual needs.

Networks benefit from including **various voices**, and should always make a point of including **women**.

Networks should promote regular sharing of experiences and pay attention to develop and maintain a database of their own members (communities, ICCAs, organisations, individuals).

All members in the network should strive to contribute something to the others.

Networks should have a mechanism for conflict resolution.

In a network, cluster-level or territory-level sub-groupings usually emerge organically as they have issues to share and need to combine their forces towards resistance. Resources for networking should strive to address such sub-national levels, although support should be maintained also to international and national levels for those activities that require an economy of scale (e.g., law and policy advocacy).

Any landscape is subject to multiple layers of governance, in law and policy (*de jure*) and in actual implementation/ practice/ relationships on the ground (*de facto*). ICCAs and their custodian communities exist within specific socio-ecological landscapes and need to understand the forces at play. Among the important tasks of ICCA networks is thus to **understand what kind of recognition and support are possible and beneficial for ICCAs in their specific context**. After understanding, if the network is positive and effective, there will be room for **joint advocacy** to obtain the needed support, whether in legislation and policy and /or implemented practice. These issues can be discussed in the on-going meetings of the network and, most particularly, among representatives of ICCA custodian communities.

## *Recognition and support under international law and policy*

The recognition of ICCAs in international biodiversity law and conservation policy, notably by IUCN and under the CBD, has been steadily growing since the turning of the millennium (see Part I). While a review of the specific international law and policy elements that sustain ICCAs is beyond the scope of this guidance, it is recommended that any custodian community become aware of the **increasingly important role of ICCAs in the international arena**, and of the fact that they are recognized as a source of global benefits for, among others, the conservation bio-cultural diversity, the maintenance of sustainable livelihoods and climate, and the satisfaction of collective human rights and indigenous peoples' rights. Such **awareness and specific knowledge can strengthen custodians' arguments and advocacy** for the forms of recognition and support they desire and deserve.

**Indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights to self-determination,** recognized under international law and policy, are a crucial issue in the recognition and support of ICCAs.[36] Advocating for collective territorial rights directly is indeed possible, for instance by stressing respect for the important connections between human rights and the environment[37] and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples.[38] These entry points may become stronger and more reliable in coming years if human rights

and indigenous peoples' rights standards and accountability mechanisms are effectively developed and used.

Strategically, it *also* appears effective to **argue for local collective territorial rights on the basis of the local, national and global conservation benefits they engender**. So far, international ICCA recognition has been achieved by taking that route, arguing that greater diversity of conservation governance is beneficial for both people and nature. Advocacy that actually *begins with* such arguments[39] may have better chances of success in the short term. It may well be the option of choice in situations where there is scarce political traction for human and indigenous peoples' rights and/or impending threats. It is also true, however, that advocacy based on conservation benefits *only* puts tenure rights and other rights in a precarious position and may constrain communities to 'deliver' conservation performance that is outside of their control or not aligned with their visions.

To find entry points into international fora that can support or advance the appropriate recognition of ICCAs, it may be helpful to reach out to relevant civil society organizations (CSOs) in the country. Are there CSOs that have already been participating in relevant international fora and conventions? Could they provide advice and connection with relevant UN agencies or government officials, such as those designated by the government as Focal Points for international conventions such as CBD or those dealing with human rights and progressive food[40] policies?  The UNDP offices in charge of implementing GEF SGP programs and GSI project support in particular are other excellent examples of agencies and individuals to contact, including for information on forms of social recognition for exemplary community initiatives, such as the Equator Prize. Last but not least, the custodian communities may wish to contact the ICCA Consortium, whose Members, Honorary members and semi-volunteer staff are present today in more than 70 countries. In making such connections, the Local Team may find it useful to have the support of the facilitator, who may be well informed about the country's situation regarding international policies and opportunities and possess personal contacts with relevant officials.

The goal here is not that every ICCA custodian community becomes active in international conventions. Rather, all interested communities can and should become fully aware that international environmental agreements have highlighted the multiple local and global values of ICCAs, and that their formal recognition and support by national governments are in line with due respect for the international law and policies those governments have subscribed to.

## *Recognition and support under national law and policies*

Diverse forms of legal and policy recognition of ICCAs are possible at the national level (see the box on National legal and policy instruments that recognise ICCAs in Part I of this document). Many governments offer legal recognition for community land or territories held under communal title, and some more specifically for ICCAs. For example, countries such as Colombia, The Philippines, India, Ecuador and Brazil legally recognize the collective land rights of their indigenous or tribal peoples and the related use rights over their bio-cultural diversity. Also, countries such as Australia, Mexico, Italy, Fiji and Senegal have specific ways of recognizing communities as governing bodies for areas of conservation value, at times included in their official protected area systems. Related mechanisms and practices are backed by specific legislation and/or policy.[41]

Today, several countries are also discussing ways to recognize community territories more specifically *as ICCAs* in order to highlight and preserve their conservation value. This is crucially important *even where communities possess collective land rights*, as ICCA recognition adds to the security of tenure and use rights of the relevant communities. Recognizing ICCAs for their conservation value can strengthen the custodian communities' demands for FPIC and the eventual opposition to the underground extractive concessions that could be assigned by governments independently of land rights.[42]

A first step in seeking national legal **recognition of ICCAs *as such*** is to develop an understanding of the **options available** under the relevant country's legislation and policy. This enables communities to assess the pros and cons of various options and their appropriateness in light of their specific context and concerns. For the ICCA Consortium, an important starting point for this research is a **national ICCA policy and legal review**,[43] which is best carried out at the national level and commissioned by many communities as it would be relevant for them all. Here, again, the collaboration between the Local Team and the facilitator is important, as the latter may access funds to commission such a national review and make sure that its results are communicated to all the concerned communities.

## *Registering ICCAs internationally and nationally*

Today, custodian communities can 'register' their ICCAs if they wish to make their existence visible in the international arena. For the last few years, the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) has provided communities with the option of documenting their ICCAs directly in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA), if the ICCA in question fits the protected area definition of the IUCN,[44] and/or in a dedicated international ICCA Registry that they manage.

The WDPA is a database of all types of protected areas as defined by IUCN, and includes ICCAs as example of one of the four main types of governance. The ICCA Registry, on the other hand, is a database of ICCAs only. It stores information in a similar format to the WDPA, but can include more details and the custodian community that provides the information has the option of maintaining it in the database but making the information unavailable to the public, if it so decides. Finally, the community has the additional option of submitting a case study, or short narrative description, of the ICCA, which can be publicly accessed on the Internet and does not require registration.

> This Module includes only introductory information to the ICCA Registry managed by UNEP-WCMC. Details and links to the forms to be completed for registration are online and in a Manual, available in several languages:
> www.wcmc.io/iccadatamanual
> www.wcmc.io/iccadatamanual_FR
> www.wcmc.io/iccadatamanual_ESP

To register an ICCA, the community completes a **FPIC form** and a **questionnaire**. The FPIC Form is to make sure that the community is fully aware of all implications of the registration. The questionnaire asks about, among others, the location and environmental characteristics of the ICCA, how it is used by the community, how it is governed and managed, what kind of rights the community has over the ICCA, the threats it faces, and its history. The Local Team and facilitator can support communities to compile this documentation.

Before an ICCA can be included in the Registry or WDPA, the ICCA Consortium asked the UNEP WCMC to make sure that it undergoes a **peer-review process,** to be confident that it is a genuine ICCA, that

appropriate procedures for the registration, such as FPIC, have been followed, and that appropriate standards are met.

**Peer-review processes** are to be **developed and led in each country by a bona-fide network of ICCA custodian indigenous peoples and local communities**. Because the tasks to be performed are sensitive, the network should be recognised as legitimate by the indigenous peoples and/or local communities in the country. The network may also benefit from establishing affiliation with the international ICCA Consortium and some form of partnership with UNDP GEF SGP, if an office exists in the country. The ICCA networks should freely choose a set of values and criteria they will abide by (for instance, fairness and transparency) and agree on an appropriate **process for the peer-review of ICCAs** in their country. So far, only a few national ICCA networks (e.g., in Spain and Iran) have deliberated about such criteria and processes, but more are likely to do so as part of the ICCA Global Support Initiative.

ICCA Registries also exist at national levels (e.g. in the Philippines and in Iran) but they are less well-known or fully developed than the international one. As with international recognition and support more generally, the ICCA registering opportunity was made available internationally before many countries even recognized the existence of ICCAs in their territories.

Should a custodian community **register** its ICCA **at the international level?  This decision should be taken on a case-by-case basis**, and a dedicated grassroots discussion could explore some specific questions (see Discussion questions 7.1).

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## Discussion questions 7.1 – Registration in a dedicated international ICCA Registry and/or in the World Database of Protected Areas (WDPA)

- Is the ICCA under threat?  Would it be **better secured** if its conservation value were internationally recognised?

- Would the ICCA site and its custodian community benefit from **better recognition** of the ICCA **conservation value** and the **global benefits** it provides?  *(Consider that the registration process may open the way for the country to "count" the ICCA for global biodiversity targets.)*

- Would the ICCA benefit from **more visibility and awareness**— both within the custodian community (e.g., among its youth) and outside?  Are there **potential dangers** from that, such as undesired attention or outside people coming to take advantage of natural resources?

- Could the registration process spark **conflicts of interest** with neighbouring communities, the government or other stakeholders (e.g., private entrepreneurs, NGOs, military, etc.)?

- Would the **social standing** of the custodian community be enhanced by being better recognised in its role governing and managing an ICCA?

- Would the process of registration have a positive influence upon the community, e.g. by **rekindling conservation knowledge and skills** and by fostering **internal solidarity** and sense of common identity?

- Would the ICCA and its governance and management systems benefit from being **better documented**, as necessary for the registration process?

- Would registration facilitate **relationships with a global network of ICCAs**, allowing custodian communities to learn from one another and appreciate their position within a global community of similar initiatives?

- In light of the above, if registration is agreed, would it be more appropriate to seek it in the **WDPA** (if the ICCA fits the IUCN definition of "protected area"[45]), in the **ICCA Registry or** in **both**?  Would it be better to make **records visible** to the public **or** keep them **private**?

## *Joint advocacy for appropriate recognition and support*

Appropriate recognition and support of their ICCAs can help communities to secure and exercise their collective rights and responsibilities. Inappropriate and inadequate recognition and support, however, are usually damaging and bring about undesired influence and impacts on the community and the ICCA.[46]  As part of the SSP, the **national ICCA network** should carefully consider what types of **legal, policy and social recognition and support** are **appropriate in its shared context** (see Discussion questions 7.2). It is particularly important that ICCA custodian communities advocate for a specific form of recognition and support only after a well-informed and transparent exploration of the benefits and risks of various possible options, and under the authority and responsibility of their legitimate representatives.

Different custodian communities that agree on what they need may wish to advocate together, as ICCA networks, for passage or implementation of law and policies appropriate for them. They may also need **partners**. National movements for land rights, peasant rights and indigenous peoples' rights may be powerful partners of ICCA custodian communities, as well as civil society organizations and movements for conservation of nature, sustainable livelihoods and human rights concerning the environment. When it comes to whether or not and how to engage with political parties, this is a choice to be taken by each ICCA network, with plenty of savvy.

The facilitator can highlight that successful advocacy usually has a clear and well-argued aim (e.g., a specific policy modification or the funding of a specific scheme) and is backed by concrete, positive examples, a dedicated budget and a constituency that is as united and diverse as possible. Importantly, the facilitator may also provide links with one or a few **individuals or organizations with legal skills**. Ideally, any specific advocacy would be supported by at least one civil society organization with legal skills, competent to offer legal strategies and solutions, file petitions, follow up specific cases, assist in land and resource issues and conflicts, back-up the recognition of specific ICCAs, offer protection for collective rights whenever challenged, train on paralegal skills, etc.

## Discussion questions 7.2 – Needed and appropriate recognition and support

- Are the custodian **communities legally recognized** as they wish to be, e.g., as specific indigenous peoples or local communities with official/ legal personality?

- Are their ICCA **institutions** (possibly *sui generis* institutions) **recognized and accepted in their governance role**?

- Are the custodian communities allowed to govern and manage their ICCAs?  If yes, how?  What is formally sanctioned?  If not, why?  What is specifically impeded?

- In general, who owns the ICCAs' land and water?  Do the custodian communities have some form of **secure tenure** (**or at least access and use**) to their ICCAs?

- Do the custodian communities have any collective rights and responsibilities over the natural resources in their ICCAs?

- Is there **social awareness** of the communities' roles and capacities in governing and managing the ICCAs?

- Do the custodian communities have the **capacity to meet** regularly, discuss ICCA decision-making and rules and positively interact with other institutions in society?  If not, what is needed for that to become possible?

- Is the government supporting or undermining the custodian communities in **enforcing ICCA rules** and providing **fair and coherent judgment and retribution to violators**? For instance, do the communities have the capacity to exercise surveillance over the ICCAs, communicate about their rules, enforce them, apprehend violators and identify and respond to threats? If not, is that desirable?  How could that to become possible?

- Do the communities have the **capacity to manage** the ICCA as they would like to do?  If not, what is needed for that to become possible?

- Do the communities have the **capacity to keep learning** and enhancing the quality of their ICCAs' governance and management (e.g., via specific exchange visits, formal training, technical advice, on-going monitoring and communication…)?  If not, what is needed for that to become possible?

- In light of all of the above, **what kind of ICCA recognition and support** seem needed in the specific context of the network?  What **advocacy objectives** are to be set?

The ICCA network will likely identify various needs for recognition and support for their ICCAs, but it should keep in mind that the **internal integrity and strength** of the custodian communities themselves is the most fundamental condition for the existence and thriving of ICCAs and should never be undermined by external support. Particularly dangerous, in this sense, is **financial support**, which has the **potential to become a burden to the community** and a source of conflicts and corruption. Various types of recognition and support initiatives, on the other hand, have proven particularly helpful (see Module 6).

## Lessons learned in advocacy

(provided by ICCA Consortium Members and Honorary members from various regions, January 2017)

Anyone has the power to be an advocate, no one should be afraid... especially when backed by an effective network and when proposing **ideas that have at least *some* appeal to all parties**.

In advocacy work, put politics aside and **reach where the power of action is**.  While retaining integrity and vision, be confident to ask for what you need... and preferably ask for something **simple, practical and strategic**.

ICCA networks provide benefits in terms of economy of scale when they carry out law and policy advocacy at national and international level on behalf of a variety of individual ICCAs... but such advocacy activities require some back-up support.

## *Resources and tools for advocating for appropriate recognition and support*

**Websites and Organizations**

ICCA Registry and detailed manuals in English, French and Spanish

ICCA Consortium webpage on developing national ICCA registries and reviews (this is to be updated…)

Iniciativa Comunales

The Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) Tenure Data Tool

Namati network, including on community land rights and environmental justice.

Life Mosaic, including the Territories of Life video toolkit and other reports

Forest Defender online legal database of international laws and rights relevant for forest governance

Community Organisers Toolbox

FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure

**Publications:**

*Bio-cultural diversity conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities – examples and analysis*

*Recognizing and Supporting ICCAs: Global Overview and National Case Studies*

*Strengthening what works – recognizing and supporting the conservation achievements of indigenous peoples and local communities*

Policy *Brief* and *Report* on ICCAs overlapped by protected areas

Policy *Brief* and *Report* on the relationship between legal recognition and ICCAs collective land tenure and community conservation

*People's Manual on the Guidelines on Governance of Land, Fisheries and Forests*

*Community-Based Paralegals: A Practitioner's Guide*

*Organising pit sawyers to engage*

*A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*

*Conservation and Indigenous Peoples in Mesoamerica: A Guide*

*Human rights standards for conservation: rights, responsibilities and redress*

*Indigenous & Tribal People's Rights in Practice - A Guide to ILO Convention No. 169*

*Indigenous Peoples & the Convention on Biological Diversity - An Education Resource Book*

*IBA Community Toolkit: Negotiation and Implementation of Impact and Benefit Agreements*

*Community-Based Paralegals: A Practitioner's Guide*

*Advocacy, lobbying and negotiation skills. What to do with REDD? A Manual for Indigenous Trainers, Module 5.*

# Annex 1 – Template to collect basic information about an ICCA

This template provides a concise list of key information a community may wish to gather about its ICCA for a variety of purposes, including in preparation to fill out the registration form for the UNEP WCMC databases.  The Local Team and facilitator may work beforehand to find locally meaningful translations for concepts that may be foreign to the concerned community (e.g. 'ecosystem').

| | |
|---|---|
| What is the name of the ICCA (in local language and in English)? | |
| In what country and region / province is it located? | |
| How big is it (approximate surface area)? | |
| What are its GIS coordinates (if available)? | |
| Does it include a maritime area?  (Yes or no) | |
| Does it include a fresh water area? (Yes or No) | |
| What ecosystem type (or types) and biodiversity (key species, functions) does the ICCA conserve? Please include brief description. | |
| Is the ICCA clearly demarcated? Include zoning map or other maps of the ICCA if applicable and appropriate. | |
| What are the types of natural resource use in the ICCA? | |
| What is the conservation status of the ICCA (excellent, good, threatened, bad)? Explain briefly and attach relevant photos with captions (if available). | |
| Who is the custodian community (name and approximate number of members)? | |
| Does the community self-identify as an indigenous people and/or belong to a religious or ethnic minority? (Yes or No, and if yes, what specific people or minority?) | |
| What languages are spoken in the community, including local languages? | |
| Is the community sedentary or mobile? If mobile, note whether it has its own transhumance territory and whether this is part of the ICCA. | |
| Is the per capita income of the community less, approximately equal or above the national average? | |
| What is the history of the community's relationship with the ICCA and the community's values about ICCA (e.g., dependency for survival, culture, local economy, community pride, sense of identity with the territory, etc.)? | |
| Is there local environmental knowledge? Note whether it is still intact and used, how widespread is it in the community hold and use it, and whether it is transmitted across generations. | |
| Do men and women, elders and young people, or practitioners of different livelihood activities have different relationships with the ICCA?  Please explain. | |
| Are there local customary institutions that, through time, | |

| | |
|---|---|
| developed rules, practices and values that have contributed to the conservation of the ICCA? If yes, please explain. | |
| Does the community remember situations in which it has "saved" their ICCA from some serious threat? If yes, please explain. | |
| Is the community aware of its ICCA? Do it use a specific name to talk about it? What is the name? Is it generic (common to country/ area) or specific to that ICCA? | |
| Are there currently clear and well-known rules for the conservation of the ICCA (e.g., a zoning plan, a written or oral management plan for the sustainable use of natural resources, a community-based monitoring system)? | |
| Does the community have a specific way of doing its own documentation and monitoring of the values of the ICCA? | |
| What are the main community objectives for managing the ICCA (e.g., preserving an area, continuing to sustainably use and manage its natural resources, restoring a part of the territory, etc.)? | |
| Is there a governance institution for the ICCA (i.e., an organisation that takes the management decisions and ensures that these decisions are respected)? Note whether it is a customary institution, a statutory institution or both/mixed. Note whether it includes a mechanism to manage conflicts and disputes. Please explain. | |
| Are there any special events that appear to strengthen the sense that the community has of itself, its internal solidarity and links with ICCA? | |
| Is the ICCA recognized as an area classified or protected by government agencies? (Yes or no? If so, by what agency? What kind of recognition? Established when?) | |
| Are there any major changes or trends taking place in the ICCA? For example, ecosystem restoration, high immigration, loss or increase of authority of the governing institution, evident changes in climate…? | |
| Are there any significant conflicts over land tenure and use of natural resources? Please explain. | |
| What are the main internal or external threats to nature and / or to the ICCA's governance system? | |
| Are community members aware of key issues concerning the ICCA, such as threats and opportunities? | |
| Are local community members organized and in solidarity with the local institution governing the ICCA? | |
| Is there local capacity to use new technologies (e.g., computers, electronic cameras, GPS), to document and store information, to manage financial resources, to communicate about its own governance and management of the ICCA, etc.? Please explain. | |
| Who are the key community contacts for the ICCA? Please include any contact information. | |

| Please provide titles and links for any published or grey literature that describes the natural, cultural and/or socio-economic characteristics of the ICCA (if any). | |
|---|---|

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# Notes

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[1] The term was first used before the World Parks Congress (Durban 2003) as "CCA", for "community conserved area". Subsequently it was expanded to 'indigenous and community conserved areas', therefore the acronym ICCAs, which was then retained even when the term was expanded to its full current form. This section draws heavily from Borrini-Feyerabend and Farvar 2017 (in press).

[2] These characteristics have been distilled from existing literature, in particular Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2010

[3] CEESP 2007

[4] At times a community cares for a specific element of the territory, such as a type of tree or an animal species, and another community takes care of territorial surveillance. We can express this in terms of "overlapping ICCAs".

[5] Consistent with the 1980 World Conservation Strategy (IUCN, UNEP and WWF 1980).

[6] This term is embraced by some and raises concerns for others. It is noted here as one of many examples, but we recognize that it is not a universally accepted way to refer to sites that hold cultural and spiritual significance for their custodians.

[7] The GSI is managed by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) GEF SGP in partnership with the ICCA Consortium, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Global Protected Areas Programme, the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

[8] We have not attempted any exhaustive analysis of all available resources and tools for each module and the few titles and links offered to the attention of the users of this document are just entry points into many, vast and fascinating areas of inquiry.

[9] Adapted from Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013:11

[10] Including sustainably used forests and fisheries. Cf. Govan et al. 2009 ; Hill et al. 2016 ; Kothari et al., 2012 ; RRI 2015 ; RSIAR, 2009

[11] Kothari et al. 2012

[12] Porter-Bolland et al. 2011

[13] Cfr. CBD COP13 Decision XIII/2 Para 7 and para 5(b)(viii); Decision XIII/5, Annex, Section IV/C, para. 15(1); Decision XIII/20, Appendix, para. (d); Decision XIII/20, para. 21; Decision XIII/20, para. 23 and Decision XIII/28.

[14] Almeida et al., 2015

[15] ICCAs may be considered either protected areas or conserved areas, depending on their circumstances. Governance by communities, which may include ICCAs, is one of the four main types of governance of protected areas recognized by IUCN and the CBD (Dudley, 2008). Conserved areas are not officially recognized as PAs, but are areas *de facto* conserved, including because of secondary voluntary or ancillary conservation results (Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2014). For a summary of recognition in international policy see ICCA Consortium international policy page.

[16] Jonas 2016

[17] Stevens 2010

[18] Knox 2017

[19] See Kothari 2008; and Lovera et al. 2013. We recognize that, in some countries and contexts, ICCAs are incorporated into market systems, including as part of national PA systems, and that custodians may engage in economic activities associated with their ICCAs (e.g., eco-tourism, paid rangers, etc.). We refer to 'non-market

based mechanisms' here to differentiate ICCAs from more traditionally market-based climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

[20] Brown and Kothari 2011

[21] Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2013

[22] Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2013

[23] For more information about ICCAs overlapped by state protected areas, see Stevens et al. 2016

[24] Kothari et al. 2013

[25] Kothari et al. 2013

[26] Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2010

[27] See, for example, the ISE Code of Ethics.

[28] This section is informed by several sources, including The International Society for Ethnobiology (ISE) Code of Ethics, Shrumm and Jonas 2012 and Rambaldi et al. 2006.

[29] Description adapted from Hill et al. 2010.

[30] RECOFTC and GIZ 2012

[31] Cultural Survival, 1999

[32] The translation into a score is just to provide the Local Team with a synthetic sense of the situation and does not need to involve the community at large, as long as the score clearly and unambiguously corresponds to the community qualitative answer.

[33] Adapted from ICCA Consortium Presentation "Is this a good "ICCA initiative?" (January 2015) that summarised suggestions from ICCA Consortium members and partners from around the world.

[34] Adapted from Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2014.

[35] National examples are listed in the (new) ICCA Consortium website. The ICCA Consortium itself is an example of international network dedicated to promoting the appropriate recognition and support to ICCAs.

[36] See Morel 2010 and Kashwan 2013, cited by Jonas 2016.

[37] Knox, 2017

[38] Tauli-Copuz, 2016

[39] See the numerous IUCN Resolutions for the proper recognition and support of ICCAs—including within protected areas, and for the recognition of the crucial role of governance in conservation; the numerous CBD Decisions that deal with ICCAs; and available summary publications, such as Kothari and Newmann, 2014 and Jonas, 2016.

[40] See the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure.

[41] Kothari and Neumann 2014

[42] Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2010

[43] Examples available here

[44] Dudley 2008

[45] According to IUCN, a protected area is "a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values" (Dudley 2008)

[46] Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2010