

National Networks for ICCAs–territories of life: Insights on Community Roots
and Best Organizational Practices

Association of the Indonesian People’s Conservation
Movement

Accompanying and deepening the movement of ICCAs–territories of life in Indonesia

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First edition published on July 1, 2026

Published by: ICCA Consortium, Association Consortium pour les aires et territoires du patrimoine autochtone et communautaire (APAC)

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Established to promote recognition and mobilize support for ICCAs—territories of life at the national level, the Working Group ICCAs Indonesia (WGII) has been working closely alongside Indigenous and traditional communities. Having now evolved into a formal, membership-based association, Perkumpulan Gerakan Konservasi Rakyat Nusantara (Association of the Indonesian People's Conservation Movement), it collaborates closely with the ICCA Custodian Network of Indonesia to advance this shared mission.

An Association for the Peoples' Conservation Movement in Indonesia

Since our founding as the Working Group ICCAs Indonesia (WGII) in 2011, our vision has always been the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity in Indonesia, firmly grounded in human rights, traditional knowledge, and justice. Following the adoption of our statute in 2025, we have formalized our operations as a membership-based association.

Our Mission

To elevate the visibility and recognition of ICCAs—territories of life across Indonesia.

To secure, defend, and advance the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, including women, youth, and marginalized groups, over their ICCAs—territories of life, local wisdom, and traditional knowledge through policy advocacy at local, national, and global levels.

To strengthen and amplify the conservation practices and governance systems of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities so they are fully recognized and integrated by government institutions, formal education systems, and other actors in conservation and biodiversity governance.

To reinforce, support, and empower the capacities and institutions of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in governing natural resources and safeguarding their living spaces.

To build a resilient, credible, and influential coalition that serves as a leading reference for stakeholders in advancing conservation grounded in human rights.

Membership of the association is open to organizations such as civil society organizations, associations, and foundations. The association currently consists of nine member organizations that collectively shape our direction and priorities. As a national association,

our strength lies in the complementary expertise of our members, ranging from participatory mapping and legal advocacy to community organizing, biodiversity governance, and Indigenous rights protection.

As an association of members, we emphasize collective work by maximizing the roles and networks of our member organizations and partners. All current members are national-level organizations with extensive subnational structures, including provincial and local units. Through these networks, our work at the local level is carried out collaboratively while remaining connected to national-level agendas.

At the national level, we function as a platform for consolidation, knowledge strengthening, and policy advocacy that integrates diverse field-based experiences. The association also benefits from the thematic specializations of its members.

We carry out our mandate through three interconnected pillars of documenting, sustaining, and defending territories of life as a strategic framework to strengthen community-based conservation in Indonesia.

Relationship With the ICCA Custodian Network of Indonesia

In carrying out our mandate, we work closely with the ICCA Custodian Network of Indonesia, or *Jaringan Pemangku Hak AKKM*¹ (JPH-AKKM), which was formally established on October 17, 2023. JPH-AKKM is a shared platform that brings together rights-holder communities from across the country to strengthen their position as the primary custodians of ecosystems and as leaders in sustainable territorial governance.

The network is organized across seven regions of Indonesia: Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Java–Bali, Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, and Papua, reflecting the country’s ecological and cultural diversity. Its core mission is to strengthen and sustain ICCAs—territories of life, and to be at the forefront of amplifying their voices related to ICCA recognition.

Our relationship with the custodian network is both strategic and complementary. The ICCA Custodian Network is the collective space through which Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities articulate their priorities, strengthen their bargaining power, and shape the direction of advocacy, while we facilitate knowledge development, methodology, and a credible ICCA documentation system.

This relationship is co-creative, forming a shared national strategy for ICCAs in Indonesia. Through this collaboration, locally rooted conservation practices can be systematically documented, strengthened through peer learning among communities, and elevated to national and international platforms as concrete evidence of community contributions to biodiversity conservation and climate action.

¹ AKKM: *Areal Konservasi Kelola Masyarakat* (Community-Governed Conservation Area)

How We Got Here?

In October 2011, an [international symposium](#), “ICCAs in Indonesia,” held in Bogor, aimed to explore the current status of, as well as the prospects, options, and opportunities for, ICCAs in Indonesia and, if appropriate, to provide initial stimulus and support to a broad alliance of organizations and people willing to engage in follow-up activities. The symposium was held in Indonesia as a collaboration between the global ICCA Consortium and several civil society organizations in Indonesia. Following the symposium, the Working Group ICCAs Indonesia (WGII) was established.

Initially, WGII consisted of ten civil society organizations in Indonesia, namely the Indigenous Peoples’ Alliance of the Archipelago (Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara, AMAN), the Indonesian Participatory Mapping Network (JKPP), WWF Indonesia, Friends of the Earth Indonesia (Wahana Lingkungan Hidup, WALHI), Sawit Watch, Pusaka Bentala Rakyat (PUSAKA) Foundation, HuMa Indonesia, Koalisi Rakyat untuk Keadilan Perikanan (KIARA), NTFP-EP Indonesia (Yayasan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Hutan Indonesia), and the Indigenous Territory Registration Agency (Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat, BRWA).

Together, these organizations initiated efforts to promote, advocate for, and strengthen recognition of ICCAs—territories of life, known as AKKM in Bahasa Indonesia. At the same time, the goal was to support the movement for territories of life in shifting conventional fortress conservation toward more just and rights-based approaches. Since 2015, WGII has been a member of the ICCA Consortium.

The core principle in carrying out the consortium’s mandate has been the sharing and distribution of roles among its members. These contributions have been strengthened through the WGII Strategic Plan, a five-year collective work plan designed to reinforce ICCA-related efforts in Indonesia. This strategic framework refers to three main pillars of our work: documenting ICCAs, sustaining ICCAs, and defending ICCAs. Each member contributes its own specific strengths, including participatory mapping, advocacy for recognition and protection of territories of life and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, community empowerment, and capacity strengthening. The strategic plan serves as the key instrument to ensure that the consortium’s collective vision is effectively realized.

Since its establishment in 2011, WGII has operated as a flexible consortium, coordinated through a secretariat led by a coordinator. The coordinator has played a central role in facilitating communication, coordination, and collaboration among WGII members in planning, implementing, and evaluating the consortium’s collective work. To support institutional administration, the WGII secretariat has been hosted by one member

organization willing to serve as the institutional host. Among the host's responsibilities has been providing fiscal sponsorship, enabling the secretariat to access funding necessary to implement its programs and strategic priorities. From 2013 to 2025, the Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat (BRWA) served as the host institution.

As the consortium evolved with its programs, organizational governance, and financial management, many members began to recognize the need for WGII to operate more expansively and no longer depend on a host institution. As a result, during the first General Assembly in 2025, members agreed on a governance transformation agenda in which WGII would transition from a loosely structured consortium into a more formal and organized institution. It was therefore agreed that WGII would be formally established as a legal association under Indonesian law in the form of a *Perkumpulan* (membership-based association).

The legal form of a *Perkumpulan* was considered the most appropriate institutional model for us because we are fundamentally membership-based. Transforming WGII into a formal association strengthens the functions of the secretariat and enhances the organization's accountability in carrying out its mandate and strategic work plan. At the same time, we adopted an organizational statute, and in October 2025, the working group was officially registered as a legal association under the name *Perkumpulan Gerakan Konservasi Rakyat Nusantara* (Association of the Indonesian People's Conservation Movement).

Membership, Governance, and Management of the Organization

Since our establishment in 2011 as a working group, we have continued to strengthen institutional governance in response to the need for greater transparency, accountability, and organizational sustainability. The adoption of our organizational statute and legal registration in 2025 as an association marked a significant step in this process. Since then, we have developed a number of internal governance policies, standard operating procedures, and organizational protocols to support our long-term development as a stronger and more accountable association. Together, these structures enable us to remain both member-driven and operationally effective.

Membership

Membership is open to entities such as civil society organizations, associations of communities, and other organizations and foundations. The addition of new members is conducted through a collective mechanism: a prospective member must be proposed by at least three current member organizations and approved by the *Musyawarah Anggota* (General Assembly), the association's highest decision-making body. Only members have voting rights; each member holds one vote and is expected to actively contribute to programs, meetings, and network strengthening. Membership may be terminated if a member withdraws, dissolves, or violates the principles and values set out in our organizational statute.

Currently, the association has nine member organizations:

1. The Indigenous Peoples' Alliance of the Archipelago (*Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara*, AMAN)
2. The Indonesian Participatory Mapping Network (JKPP)
3. The Indigenous Territory Registration Agency (*Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat*, BRWA)
4. HuMa Indonesia
5. Pusaka Bentala Rakyat (PUSAKA) Foundation
6. Sawit Watch
7. Friends of the Earth Indonesia (*Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia*, WALHI)
8. Non-Timber Forest Product Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP) Indonesia
9. The People's Coalition for Fisheries Justice (*Koalisi Rakyat untuk Keadilan Perikanan*, KIARA)

Governance and Management: Decision-Making Processes and Bodies

We have a three-pronged, integrated decision-making system to balance efficiency, participation, and accountability.

Strategic governance decisions, including the evaluation of the strategic plan, institutional direction, and leadership appointments, are made through the General Assembly of members, which is convened every four years. During these assemblies, JPH-AKKM participates as an observer and provides feedback and recommendations.

Institutional and advocacy decisions related to collaboration, campaigns, work planning, and urgent organizational matters are made collectively by members through coordination meetings held at least every three months. In relevant discussions, JPH-AKKM may also participate according to its roles and capacities.

Operational and programmatic decisions are handled by the secretariat through regular monthly meetings or as needed. These decisions focus on day-to-day coordination, project implementation, and administrative management.

This structure ensures that member organizations and rights holders are represented across all levels of governance while maintaining flexibility in implementation. It is designed to keep organizational governance participatory while allowing the secretariat to effectively implement our association's strategic mandate.

The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the highest decision-making body. Convened once every four years, it is typically held in a format agreed upon by members, whether in-person, online, or hybrid, depending on the context and needs. Each member organization holds one vote, and a quorum is reached with at least fifty percent plus one (50% + 1) of the total members. This forum brings together all member organizations, with JPH-AKKM serving as an observer.

The assembly holds a strategic mandate to define and adopt the association's long-term strategic plan, appoint the executive coordinator and/or new members, select members of the supervisory board, and review accountability reports from the executive coordinator. It is also a space for evaluating program implementation and discussing institutional development. Decisions are made collectively, reflecting the collaborative nature of our association, where governance is rooted in participation, consensus, and shared responsibility among its member organizations.

Leadership is selected through a collective process within the General Assembly. The executive coordinator (as the head of the secretariat) is elected for a four-year term and may be re-elected once. Meanwhile, the supervisory board, consisting of three representatives from member organizations, is also selected in the same forum, following a collaborative approach and ensuring women's representation. This reflects a leadership model that is not centered on individuals but rooted in a shared mandate from the members.

In terms of recruitment, the executive coordinator has the authority to recruit staff and technical experts as needed. Since our establishment, our leadership cycle reached an important milestone with the adoption of our organizational statute and the convening of General Assembly in 2025, marking the beginning of a more structured system for leadership elections and organizational transitions moving forward.

Supervisory Board

Our association is guided by a supervisory board composed of three executive leaders from member organizations. The board provides strategic oversight and institutional guidance to ensure that our programs, partnerships, and decisions remain aligned with our statute and guiding principles. In addition to oversight, the board offers recommendations to the executive coordinator on key organizational and principal matters.

Executive Coordinator and Secretariat

The executive coordinator leads the implementation of our strategic plan and ensures that the organization's mandate is carried out effectively. In this role, the coordinator oversees the functions of the secretariat, manages daily operations, and facilitates coordination among members so that strategic priorities are translated into collective action. The coordinator also plays an important role in maintaining institutional continuity, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring accountability across the organization. The secretariat serves as the operational backbone of our association by supporting program delivery, communications, administration, and coordination between members and partners.

Finance and Accountability

Financial management is handled by dedicated finance staff within the secretariat, responsible for administering grant-based program funds. Before we became a legal entity, financial management was administered through a host organization acting as a fiscal sponsor. Since our formalization, we have transitioned toward direct financial management under our own institutional structure, allowing stronger alignment between program implementation and accountability.

To strengthen governance, we have developed internal financial procedures and standard operating protocols. We are also transitioning toward a digital financial management system and conducting periodic audits to ensure compliance with the principles of transparency and good governance.

Localization and Specialization

We do not have formal regional or local chapters. As an association, we emphasize collective work by maximizing the roles and networks of our member organizations and partners. All nine members are national-level organizations with extensive subnational structures. For example, AMAN operates with regional and local chapters (*Pengurus Wilayah*, PW, and *Pengurus Daerah*, PD), WALHI with provincial branches, and JKPP with participatory mapping service nodes (*Simpul Layanan Pemetaan Partisipatif*, SLPP) across different regions. Through these networks, our work at the local level is carried out collaboratively while remaining connected to national-level agendas.

At the national level, we function as a platform for consolidation, knowledge strengthening, and policy advocacy that integrates diverse field-based experiences. We also benefit from the thematic specializations of our members. For instance, KIARA focuses on marine issues, JKPP on participatory mapping, and NTFP-EP on sustainable livelihoods. This diversity strengthens our thematic work on ICCAs, enabling us to operate across both geographic scales and interconnected issue areas.

Major Initiatives and Strategies to Promote ICCAs–Territories of Life and Stay Rooted in Communities

We carry out our mandate through three interconnected pillars: documenting, sustaining, and defending ICCAs, which serve as a strategic framework to strengthen community-based conservation in Indonesia.

Through the documenting pillar, we build credible evidence base on territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. This work is undertaken through participatory registration, peer review, spatial analysis, and a web-based information system that enables community conservation practices to be recorded in a systematic and accountable way. Beyond data collection, this documentation serves as an important instrument for demonstrating the ecological contribution of community governance, increasing public recognition, and providing a stronger foundation for policy reform toward rights-based conservation.

Through the sustaining pillar, we focus on strengthening the long-term resilience of community conservation systems. This includes supporting community capacities, reinforcing traditional knowledge systems, facilitating intergenerational learning, and expanding collaboration among communities, civil society, and academic institutions. A key achievement of this effort was the facilitation of the ICCA Custodian Network, which provides a collective platform for communities to strengthen leadership, share learning, and articulate their own priorities. In this process, we act as a bridge that connects local knowledge and community initiatives with broader institutional support.

Through the defending pillar, we advance advocacy at local, national, and global levels to protect community rights over territories, biodiversity, and traditional knowledge. This includes promoting legal reform, monitoring policy implementation, and engaging in international forums such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and UNFCCC to ensure that global commitments are translated into national action. By linking grassroots realities with policy processes, we help strengthen the transition from exclusionary conservation toward a more just, inclusive, and rights-based conservation system in Indonesia.

Documenting ICCAs

We have developed a community-led ICCA documentation system that places Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities at the center of the registration process. Participation is voluntary, ensuring that communities remain the primary owners of their knowledge and territories. To strengthen legitimacy, we introduced a peer-review mechanism, allowing communities to validate each other's conservation practices while integrating biodiversity inventories into a more collaborative documentation model.

Historically, we shifted our role toward technical support and coordination, while mobilizing member organizations and partners to lead the process collectively. This change significantly accelerated documentation, strengthened solidarity across the movement, and increased wider understanding of ICCAs.

The adoption of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) and Indonesia's updated IBSAP created a new policy opening for community-based conservation. We used ICCA data as evidence of the ecological contribution of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, demonstrating their relevance to national and global biodiversity targets through various spatial and social analyses needed by policymakers.

The results have been significant. Registered ICCAs increased from 647,457.49 hectares in May 2025 to 1,010,430 hectares by May 2026, covering 192 community-conserved areas across Indonesia and encompassing 527 varieties of ICCAs. Through sustained advocacy, this data was also incorporated into Indonesia's National Biodiversity Clearing-House Mechanism, marking an important step toward the formal recognition of community conservation.

In a case study from West Kalimantan, documentation of the Dayak Simpakng community's ICCA helped secure a formal decree recognizing the Indigenous community. Building on this experience, we are now using ICCA data in multiple regions to strengthen the recognition of customary territories and local conservation systems across Indonesia.

Sustaining ICCAs

We strengthen the long-term sustainability of ICCAs through a strategy that combines community capacity building, livelihood resilience, youth leadership, and stronger advocacy, ensuring that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities remain central to conservation governance.

Strengthening Community-Led ICCA Documentation

We have expanded community ownership of ICCA registration by training Indigenous and local community members as ICCA documentation facilitators. Through this process,

young community members are equipped to document their own territories, governance systems, and biodiversity values, reducing dependence on external actors and ensuring that knowledge remains within the community. This has strengthened the quality of documentation while building a stronger grassroots network to sustain the ICCA movement over time.

Sustainable Livelihood Assessment

To ensure conservation can be maintained economically as well as ecologically, we support sustainable livelihood assessments in ICCAs. These processes have been held in Kasepuhan Cibarani and Manado. These assessments help communities identify livelihood practices that are compatible with biodiversity protection while reducing vulnerability to external economic pressures.

Empowering Intergenerational Leadership

We invest in intergenerational leadership by strengthening the role of young Indigenous leaders. This includes young paralegal training, which equips emerging leaders with the skills to respond to tenure conflicts, rights violations, and legal challenges affecting their territories. In late 2025, together with the ICCA Consortium Southeast Asia, we also supported a youth mentorship program on global environmental negotiations, sponsoring Indigenous youth from Papua, West Kalimantan, Maluku, East Sumba, and Banten. These initiatives are helping build a new generation of custodians capable of defending their territories locally while engaging in national and international policy spaces.

Strengthening Advocacy Capacity

We also strengthen the ability of communities to influence policy and defend their territories. In 2025, we organized two national webinar series ahead of UNFCCC COP-30, providing Indigenous leaders and civil society with practical knowledge on climate negotiations and advocacy strategies. At the regional level, we worked with the ICCA Consortium Southeast Asia to convene a learning exchange involving nearly 70 participants from seven countries within the regional assembly, resulting in shared advocacy priorities on Indigenous rights, tenure recognition, and the implementation of the KM-GBF and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). This work has also extended to the local level, where we supported the development of inclusive provincial biodiversity plans (*RIP Kehati*) in East Java, Southwest Papua, Aceh, and East Kalimantan, formally integrating IPLC representatives into biodiversity planning processes for the first time.

Defending ICCAs

We advance the protection of ICCAs through strategic advocacy at local, national, regional, and international levels, ensuring that the rights, territories, and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities are increasingly reflected in biodiversity and climate governance.

Securing Local Recognition of ICCAs

At the local level, we have strengthened advocacy to ensure that ICCAs are formally recognized through district and provincial policies on customary knowledge and local wisdom (*kearifan lokal*). By using ICCA documentation as evidence, we support communities in demonstrating that their conservation systems are not informal practices, but legitimate governance models that protect biodiversity while sustaining cultural identity.

This approach has created new entry points for local governments to acknowledge community-conserved territories within biodiversity planning, spatial governance, and customary law recognition. In several regions, ICCA data has already been used to support legal recognition processes for Indigenous communities and to promote local regulations that protect traditional ecological knowledge. These local gains have become an important foundation for broader policy reform, proving that recognition of ICCAs can begin from the ground up.

Advocacy and Influencing Policy

At the national level, we have concentrated our advocacy on three strategic policy arenas that will shape the future of rights-based conservation in Indonesia.

First, we have remained actively engaged in the revision of the Natural Resources Conservation Law (UU KSDAHE), advocating for a shift away from fortress conservation toward a framework that recognizes Indigenous and community-led conservation as part of Indonesia's formal conservation system. We have consistently pushed for stronger provisions on ICCAs and rights-based governance of conservation management. We are currently working on a judicial review of the new Natural Resources Conservation Law.

Second, we continue to support advocacy for the long-delayed Indigenous Peoples Bill (*RUU Masyarakat Adat*), recognizing that legal certainty for Indigenous Peoples remains fundamental to the long-term protection of ICCAs. Without broader recognition of Indigenous rights, conservation policy reforms alone cannot fully secure community territories.

Third, following Indonesia's adoption of the updated Indonesian Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (IBSAP) and its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) climate commitment, we have built strong engagement with Indonesia's CBD and UNFCCC national focal points, particularly within the Ministry of Environment. Following CBD COP-16, we were formally appointed by the Minister of Environment to the Working Team for Indonesia's 7th National Report (NatRep 7), where we serve as the lead civil society reference on IPLC-related indicators under Target 17. Through this role, we have introduced key recommendations on rights-based conservation, community participation, and non-state actor involvement in biodiversity governance.

Regional Influence

At the Southeast Asian level, we worked with the ICCA Consortium Southeast Asia and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity to influence the development of the Regional Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (RBSAP). Through technical input and participation in regional workshops, we helped strengthen recognition of Indigenous territories, land tenure, and community governance within regional biodiversity planning, ensuring that Southeast Asian conservation policy increasingly reflects community rights.

International Advocacy

We have also strengthened Indonesia's community voice in global negotiations. During technical meetings and Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the CBD, we work closely with global caucuses, including the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, the Global Youth Biodiversity Network, and other Indigenous alliances. We prepared and submitted multiple policy interventions and position papers to the Indonesian delegation and international platforms, helping elevate issues such as traditional knowledge, tenure rights, and the biodiversity-climate nexus within international negotiations.

Expanding Public and Political Pressure

Beyond formal policy spaces, we have expanded advocacy through public engagement. Through national dialogues, side events, academic forums, and collaboration with the media, the press, and larger coalitions, such as Mongabay, the Society of Indonesian Environmental Journalists, the Climate Justice Coalition (JustCOP), and the Indigenous Peoples Bill Coalition (*Koalisi Kawal RUU Masyarakat Adat*), we have helped bring community conservation into broader public discourse by connecting local realities with national and global policy debates.

These initiatives have strengthened our position within the network of CSOs, communities, and the government, ensuring we are recognized as a formidable coalition supporting

people's conservation movements, human rights-based conservation, and inclusive conservation practices. This is evidenced by our active involvement in various forums and coalitions, such as the Conservation Working Group, the Tenure Coalition, the Climate Justice Coalition, and the Rights-Based Fisheries Management (RBFM) Forum. This engagement yields a significantly greater impact, allowing us to integrate people's conservation values into diverse advocacy efforts surrounding tenure policies, climate change, and coastal and small island issues.

Our strengthened relationships with duty-bearers and policymakers are demonstrated by invitations from the KSDAHE Bill Working Committee to present on the participation and rights of Indigenous Peoples during public hearing forums. Furthermore, we were invited by the Ministry of National Development Planning to present on the institutional aspects of IBSAP during their consultations, and by the Indonesian delegation for the CBD to participate in the pre-SBSTTA and SBI consultation sessions.

Here is the text with the grammar corrected, APA formatting applied, and the "we/us/our" perspective thoroughly integrated to match your established narrative voice. I also updated references from "coalition" to "association" where appropriate to reflect your new formal institutional status.

Major Challenges

External Challenges

Indonesia today is confronting a growing wave of state policies that increasingly fail to uphold human rights. As an example, the current system requires local governments to formally acknowledge Indigenous communities (e.g., via *Peraturan Daerah*) before those communities can pursue land rights. By making this dependent on local authorities, the system violates the core Indigenous right of self-identification. Then, Government priorities have shifted toward large-scale, investment-driven, and extractive development, generating widespread deforestation, land dispossession, and the loss of Indigenous and community living territories. Many of these pressures are not incidental; they are being formally embedded into national legal instruments, transforming structural injustice into state-sanctioned policy. The Omnibus Law on Job Creation is one of the clearest examples, where deregulation has accelerated environmental degradation while deepening the vulnerability of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

Within our strategic concerns, this trend has become increasingly visible in the revision of the Natural Resources Conservation Law (*UU KSDAHE*). Rather than strengthening rights-based conservation, the revised framework continues to exclude Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities as legitimate rights holders in conservation governance. Problematic provisions, including the possibility of revoking land rights in the name of conservation enforcement, have created new legal uncertainty and deepened the risks faced by communities who have long protected biodiversity. We have also documented serious procedural flaws in the drafting of the law, including rushed deliberations, limited transparency, and weak public participation, further undermining the legitimacy of the policy itself. At the same time, a series of ministerial regulations have continued to open pathways for exploitation within conservation areas and community-managed territories.

In response, we have worked collectively with our members and broader networks to challenge these policies through collaborative advocacy, recognizing that policy reform cannot be pursued in isolation. Together with civil society organizations, Indigenous leaders, legal experts, and community networks, we have monitored harmful legislation, organized public policy reviews, and brought constitutional challenges before the Constitutional Court of Indonesia to contest laws that weaken community rights. Although judicial outcomes have not always delivered the change sought, these efforts have helped push unjust conservation policies into the public spotlight and strengthen national awareness of how conservation can be used to marginalize communities.

This collective approach has also strengthened solidarity across movements. By working alongside member organizations and networks, we have helped build a stronger shared voice that connects local struggles with national reform agendas. Policy dissemination, legal analysis, and public examinations conducted with universities and independent scholars have shown that problematic policymaking is not only rooted in executive power but is often compounded by the limited willingness of judicial institutions to correct harmful state decisions.

At the same time, advocacy itself carries increasing risks. Human rights defenders, community leaders, and environmental activists continue to face criminalization, intimidation, and growing threats to digital security. Preventing these risks has become more difficult as conservation, natural resource governance, and extractive interests remain deeply intertwined with political and economic power. In this context, our collaborative advocacy model has become essential not only for influencing policy but for building the solidarity, protection, and collective power needed to defend ICCAs and the people who safeguard them.

Internal Challenges

One of our most significant internal challenges lies in maintaining effective coordination, communication, and sustained commitment among our members. As an association made up of organizations with different mandates, institutional responsibilities, and major programmatic priorities of their own, members often face competing demands that can affect the speed and consistency of collective action. To address this, we have increasingly focused on distributing roles more clearly and maximizing the comparative strengths of each member organization, ensuring that responsibilities are shared more strategically and collective ownership of the association's agenda remains strong.

A second challenge relates to the limited capacity of the secretariat to engage simultaneously with policy processes at the global, national, and regional levels. The growing number of policy spaces that require engagement can stretch internal resources and make it more difficult to fully unpack the structural drivers, political intentions, and long-term implications behind emerging regulations. In response, we have worked to shift from a secretariat-centered model toward a more collaborative structure, where members contribute technical expertise, political analysis, and field-based knowledge to strengthen our overall capacity.

We also face organizational pressure from limited access to flexible funding. Donor priorities and short funding cycles can sometimes influence the pace and direction of strategic work, creating tension between externally funded activities and our long-term movement priorities. To address this, we continue to strengthen collective resource sharing and deepen member participation, ensuring that our strategic direction remains rooted in our shared vision and not solely shaped by external funding timelines.

Way Forward

Moving forward, we are stepping into a pivotal period of organizational and strategic strengthening. Rooted in our three core pillars—documenting, sustaining, and defending ICCAs—territories of life, our association will prioritize expanding effective, community-driven conservation practices that have already shown clear results throughout Indonesia. These efforts include developing the Local Biodiversity Outlook (LBO) and enhancing the People’s Conservation Learning Centre to serve as a nationwide hub for knowledge sharing, leadership training, and intergenerational learning.

Additionally, we will implement a more rigorous system for tracking conservation conflicts to document rights violations and policy impacts on community lands, while taking successful local models of ICCA recognition, sustainable livelihoods, and youth empowerment to the national level. This year, we are also spearheading the creation of our Strategic Plan 2027–2032. This roadmap will refine shared goals, boost member collaboration, and empower our association to shape the future of climate and biodiversity policy in Indonesia. Ultimately, this proactive approach is designed to bolster our internal resilience and firmly establish community-based conservation as a powerful, legitimate avenue for achieving socio-ecological justice.

Further Reading and Resources

WGII Publications:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1udZKRllg4LvkVEV8WQMt60F_40Twf7fq?usp=sharing

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@WorkingGroupICCAsIndonesia>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/iccas_indonesia/

<https://www.instagram.com/peoplesconservation>