

# ICCAs & Aichi Targets

## The Contribution of Indigenous Peoples' and Local Community Conserved Territories and Areas to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-20 (Aichi Targets)

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-20, framed by Parties to the CBD at the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties in 2010, outlines an ambitious roadmap towards halting and reversing biodiversity loss across the planet. While clearly not a replacement for the Convention, which is a mix of policy, goals, strategies, actions, and guidance, the Strategic Plan is crucial for its implementation. The 20 'Aichi Targets' it encompasses understandably go beyond ecological and biological aspects, essential as they are, to also focus on the social-cultural, economic, and political elements of achieving this roadmap.

While all sectors of society have a role to play in the implementation of the Strategic Plan, indigenous peoples and local communities are central to it. This is not only because the lands and waters over which such peoples and communities have custodianship and/or customary



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rights to, contain the majority of the world's biodiversity, but also because their practices, knowledge, skills and customs embody conservation (including sustainable use) in ways that the modern world has much to learn from.

Indigenous peoples' and local community conserved territories and areas (ICCAs) have increasingly been recognized as significant sites and initiatives of conservation. ICCAs are embedded both in the general recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples' (and of late, of other local communities) to their territories, self-determination, cultural identity, human rights and other aspects (as for instance reflected in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UNDRIP). They also reflect the more specific realization of the need to both diversify and improve the governance of conservation in general and protected areas (PAs) in particular (as for instance reflected in the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas), to enable increased resilience, coverage, and efficacy.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, it is also important to understand the contribution that ICCAs have made, and could continue to make in even more enhanced form, in the achievement of the Aichi Targets. Indeed the very concept and definition of ICCAs already incorporates a number of aspects of these Targets, and more generally of the Strategic Plan. This document provides a brief glimpse of this contribution.

ICCAs in all countries and regions face threats from a variety of sources: tenurial insecurity, extractive industry and inappropriate development, imposition of inappropriate land uses including top-down government protected areas and industrial agriculture, internal inequalities and injustices relating to gender, class, caste, ethnicity, race, and so on, demographic and cultural changes eroding traditional cultural values, incursion of external markets. In the absence of recognition and support from governments and civil society, these threats are difficult to tackle. This document

therefore attempts to provide the grounds and justification for a simple assertion: **the achievement of the Aichi Targets, and thus the future of biodiversity on earth, is inextricably linked to the recognition and support of ICCAs.**

There are various legal, policy, administrative, political, social, financial and other ways of providing recognition and support to ICCAs. However, this always needs to be done in ways that are appropriate to their cultural, political, ecological, and social contexts.<sup>2</sup>

The following sections of the document provide a description and examples of how ICCAs are relevant for each of the 20 Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan. While each Target contains examples of ICCAs relevant to it, it should be noted that many ICCAs will encompass more than one Target, since they cut across the arenas of protection/conservation, sustainable use, livelihoods and local well-being, awareness, knowledge and practices, resource-raising and sharing, and other elements that are spread through the Strategic Plan. Indigenous peoples and local communities themselves do not necessarily compartmentalize these aspects, they *live* them in an inextricably linked manner.

It is worth highlighting here that while ICCAs can help in the achievement of all Targets, *in particular Targets 1,5,7,11,13,14 and 18 simply cannot be achieved without ICCAs.*

Finally, a few caveats are important. The positive light in which ICCAs are cast in this note does not imply that they are free of problems, or that they are universally successful; nor is it implied that indigenous peoples and local communities are always and everywhere oriented towards conservation and sustainable use. Nevertheless, ICCAs are a widespread enough phenomenon to justify highlighting their contributions in the way the rest of the document does. And they should be located within the broader attempts to promote deeper links between humans and the rest of nature, recognizing that there are diverse and multiple world-views and ways of doing this.

# Strategic Goal A

## ► Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss

Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society

ICCAs represent key spheres in which indigenous peoples and local communities integrate elements of biodiversity, culture, livelihoods, and governance, often seamlessly. Knowledge systems, beliefs, and practices involved in governing and managing ICCAs provide crucial examples of how the rest of society can also 'mainstream' biodiversity in all aspects of life... or rather, ensure that biodiversity as a fundamental underlying bedrock of human society is recognized and respected.

ICCA recognition and respect provides government and mainstream society with a critical means of addressing a key cause of biodiversity loss, viz. the lack of acknowledgement of bio-cultural diversity and the ICCAs which maintain it. Indeed, such recognition could represent the quintessential example of collaboration between different sectors of society in favour of both conservation of biodiversity and the well-being of its custodians.



## Awareness of biodiversity values

ICCAs, including both the ones that are a continuation of lives and lifestyles from the past, and those established or revived in more recent times, involve collective knowledge and awareness of the values of biodiversity. This is sometimes implicit in cultures and lifestyles, sometimes stated explicitly as a goal or objective worth striving for. In all cases where ICCAs have been recently established or revived, or where threats to ancient ICCAs have been recently tackled, there is fresh awareness of the values of nature and the steps needed to conserve it. The ICCA Consortium has developed a self-evaluation tool for ICCA strength and resilience, which provides a means for raising awareness within

Burning spinifex grass for regeneration, Walaiikara IPA, Australia (Courtesy Bruce Rose)

► By 2020, at the latest, people are **aware of the values** of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.



communities.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, ICCAs provide inspiration, information, and lessons for other peoples and communities to initiate their own conservation practices, or revive them if they may have been lost in the past.

Finally, through ICCAs, the public can better understand the value of biodiversity, and

the relationship between cultural diversity and biodiversity, an idea that is often closer to them than a strictly scientific approach. ICCAs also shape broader society's thinking on the value of indigenous knowledge in finding solutions and providing models for others to learn from.

## Examples

- ▶ In Australia, Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) are voluntarily declared by Indigenous people (Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders) as an expression of their commitment to conserve the biodiversity and cultural values of their traditional estates. In return, the Australian Government recognises IPAs as part of the national PA system and provides funding support. Declaration of IPAs is made by indigenous people independently of government legislation and effective management is achieved through a variety of legally codified and non-codified mechanisms. Opportunities to establish formal conservation agreements or covenants to provide legal protection of IPA biodiversity values exist in each Australian state and territory.<sup>4</sup> (see also Targets 9, 11 and 20)
- ▶ The Reserva Cuyabeno, in Ecuador, encompasses several territories of indigenous communities. Among those, the Cofan communities, having lost a large part of their ancestral territory to oil and timber industries and keenly aware of the importance of biodiversity to them, have organised a network of indigenous guards, strict rules to limit resource utilisation and on-going wildlife inventories and evaluation programs.
- ▶ The regional government of Galicia (Spain) has very recently created a new type of PA ("Private Area of Natural Interest", or EPIN by its initials in Galician language). The first and only EPIN so far declared is "Sobreiras do Faro", a "Neighbour Woodland" which previously applied for being included in such a category. The decision to include this local community conserved area in the regional PA system is based on promoting its outstanding natural and governance values by, among others, facilitating regulated public access to the area. Neighbour Woodlands are an ancient type of common forest. With more than 3,000 such areas in Spain, they are managed by a Commoners' General Meeting where local or national governmental administrations have no representative rights.



### Integration of biodiversity values

Many ICCAs have an explicit or implicit economic benefit, including the maintenance of livelihood security, the creation of new or enhanced jobs, the

By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into **national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes** and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.

sustenance of primary production systems, food and water security, and being a 'safety net' in times of distress. In this

sense they are crucial components of appropriate development and poverty eradication or reduction processes. Where there is no poverty in the first place, they are part of poverty-prevention processes.

Where ICCAs are beginning to be recognised at national levels, their contribution to strategies at a national level regarding development and poverty, or their value to national accounting

and reporting systems will also start being incorporated. However, for ICCAs there is also a risk of commodification and market-orientation, as well as appropriation of existing work by national programmes, or imposition of top-down uniform models of conservation on an extremely diverse ground reality. Policies and programmes of ICCA recognition need to take these risks into account.

## Examples

- ▶ In 2012 the total cash income generated by conservancies (community managed areas for tourism, hunting, or other resource use) in Namibia was around US\$5.5 million. Conservancies, community forests, and other community –based conservation initiatives provided employment for 6477 people. Some conservancies choose to use profits from their wildlife and tourism income to provide cash either to villages or directly to members or households. Others use their wildlife and tourism income for social projects agreed by the community. Conservancies also produce a range of non-cash benefits, including meat of hunted animals. They invest part of their income in management of natural resources through employment of game guards and natural resource monitors, including wildlife monitoring. Due to its impact on community well-being, community based natural resource management (comprising conservancies, community forests, and other similar approaches) are part of Namibia's National Development Plan.<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ In northern Italy, the income from well-managed communal forests goes to support socio-cultural and recreational activities that benefit the whole community, in some cases carrying on for centuries; this includes assistance to the poor, education funds, road construction and maintenance, water supply, free health care and funds to respond to emergencies.<sup>6</sup>
- ▶ The traditional territory of the Udege indigenous people in Bikin, in the province of Primorsky in Russia's Far East, is part of the largest remaining reserve of temperate old-growth forest in Russia; under a lease agreement with the provincial authorities, the Udege continue their traditional management and harvesting practices, including marketing of Korean pine nuts, medicinal plants, ferns, and fruits.<sup>7</sup>
- ▶ The Philippines' revised their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) which is to incorporate ICCAs (see below, Target 17) and this will form part of its Development Plan.<sup>8</sup>
- ▶ The National Development Strategy 2011-20 of the Solomon Islands incorporates 'community governance regimes' for ecosystems and natural resources, 'traditional fisheries protection', and other ICCA-related strategies.<sup>9</sup>





# target three

## Incentives

ICCAs incorporate systems of rules (written/unwritten, formal/informal), which are often a mix of disincentives (sanctions, penalties, etc. for violations) and incentives (ecosystem and economic benefits, awards, recognition, etc. for successful conservation / sustainable use). Where governments are recognizing ICCAs, there are often similar official systems of incentives and disincentives.



Man fishing in the Ndoki River  
(Courtesy Christian Charfela'in)

By 2020, at the latest, **incentives**, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio economic conditions.

Probably the strongest incentive for long term conservation and sustainable use is to provide tenurial security, particularly by recognizing collective and traditional ownership of the land and sea. Within the framework of secure rights, self-determination, and other such principles (as reflected in UNDRIP), there could be a range of other possible incentives to employ, as also the identification of disincentives that need to be removed. This may include financial and fiscal measures, administrative and civil society support, awards and social recognition, capacity building and training inputs, and so on.

## Examples<sup>10</sup>

- ▶ In several countries (e.g. Chile, India, Kenya, Namibia, the Philippines, Fiji, United Kingdom), governments and/or civil society organizations have honoured peoples/communities governing ICCAs with awards, or recommended them for such awards at national and international level. Interestingly, these are not only meant to recognize conservation contributions, but several awards to ICCAs have been for models of sustainable development (e.g. in Spain), innovative natural resource management, and socio-cultural achievements (including, in Spain, as Intangible Cultural Heritage).
- ▶ In the Philippines, donor and governmental support has been extended to community forestry, and a recent project to identify and recognize ICCAs; technical inputs to prepare Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plans are also extended, including by civil society groups.
- ▶ In India, funding from the central government is available to community conserved areas, and there is a directive to states to extend developmental facilities to communities that get titles under the Forest Rights Act.
- ▶ In Ecuador, a donor and an international conservation civil society organization have entered into a 'conservation incentive agreement' with the Chachi Indigenous People, to protect 7200 ha of forest in return for compensation payments.<sup>11</sup>



# target four

## Use of natural resources

Given that one criterion for the definition of ICCAs is the achievement of conservation (or its clear potential), this target is virtually built into the concept and practice of ICCAs. Anecdotal evidence of sustainability and conservation in ICCAs is already compelling, and systematic scientific studies are beginning to be done, and many more would be important and welcome.

ICCAs, covering possibly as much or more of the terrestrial area and marine area of the

By 2020, at the latest, governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented **plans for sustainable production and consumption** and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.

earth as do government-designated protected areas, encompass an enormous diversity and range of sustainable use, production and consumption, especially in the primary sector of the economy (agriculture, forestry, fisheries, animal husbandry), and increasingly in the secondary and tertiary sectors (decentralised manufacture including handicrafts, community-based ecotourism, etc).

## Examples

- ▶ In Kenya, Beach Management Units (BMUs) are associations of fishermen, traders, and other fishery users and stakeholders located at coastal landing sites. BMUs are able to develop and enforce rules governing their fisheries, including demarcating boundaries and excluding non-members from outside the area, with the support and sanction of the Department of Fisheries.<sup>12</sup>
- ▶ In several countries of the South Pacific, communities govern and plan their Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) for sustained fisheries and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems. (see also Targets 6 and 11)
- ▶ Territories of mobile indigenous peoples can be considered ICCAs in whole or in part. Some such peoples practice nomadic or transhumant pastoralism as their main source of livelihood, while others follow herds of wild animals, hunt and gather forest products, follow whales and other marine fauna, or practice long term rotational (shifting) agriculture. Many mobile indigenous peoples' territories such as those of the tribal confederacies of Iran, stretch for hundreds of kilometres in length.<sup>13</sup> Mobility is both a distinct cultural feature and an explicit strategy for conserving (including sustainably using) natural resources, often compatible with sustaining wildlife.
- ▶ Spain has a pastoral area (Bárdenas Reales) managed by a 'Livestockbreeders Junta' for sustainable livestock production, since the year 882. It is currently a Natural Park. Also other kind of ICCAs in Spain are inside National Parks. All of them are based on sustainable use of goods (water, wood, etc.) since ancient times.<sup>14</sup>
- ▶ Lake Danau Empangau in West Kalimantan, Indonesia, is a natural habitat for the endemic arwana fish. Once seriously threatened, restocking of the lake and subsequent protection and monitoring by the local communities has helped increase its population, while sustainable fishing has enhanced community livelihood security. Revenues also go into a **fund** for infrastructure repairs, helping youth and women in difficulty, cleaning and monitoring the habitat and education and awareness.<sup>15</sup>
- ▶ In India, several communities that have obtained titles under the Forest Rights Act 2006 are making plans for the sustainable use and conservation of their forests.<sup>16</sup>

# Strategic Goal B

## ▶ Reduce pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use

### Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use

As mentioned above (Target 4), the achievement of conservation is part of the definition of ICCAs; this necessarily encompasses tackling, and reducing or eliminating direct pressures on biodiversity. These pressures could be emanating from within the relevant community, or from external sources. Sustainable use is also often an explicit aim of ICCAs, or is the outcome of other aims. It is based on the existence of an institution capable of taking wise, well implemented and respected, adaptable or resilient decisions in response to changes in the ecological and socio-economic context, based on their historical on-site experience, and using local knowledge and expertise alone or in combination with externally provided knowledge and expertise.



## target five

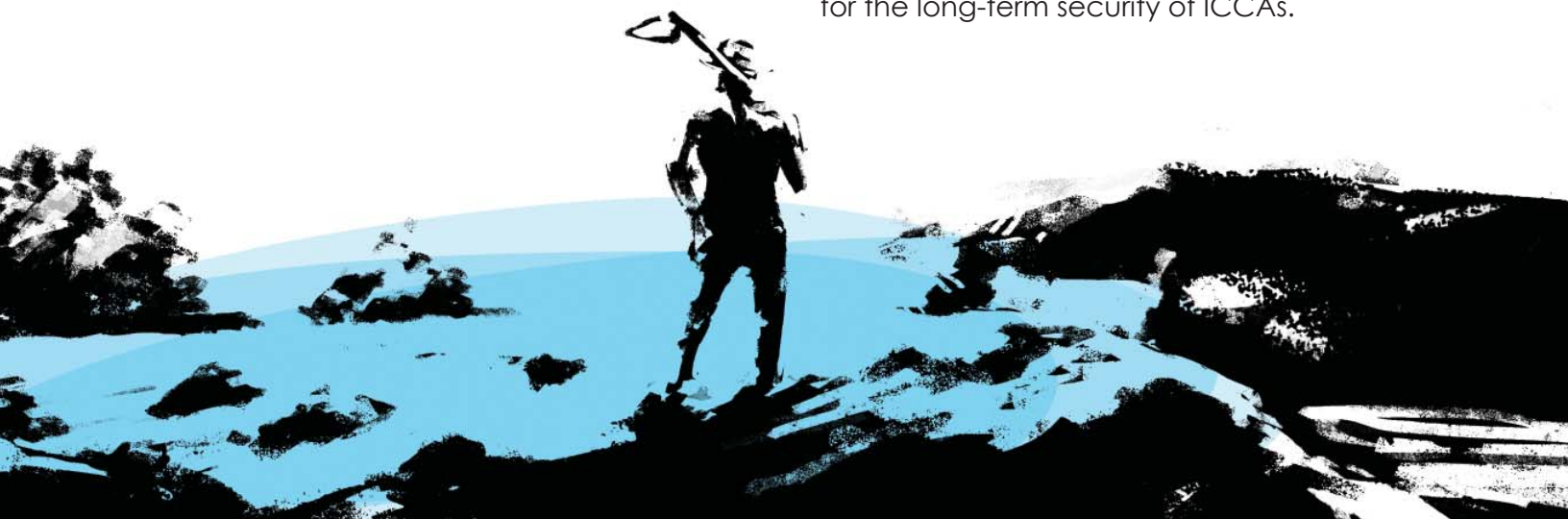
### Loss of habitats ▶

Without ICCAs, the loss of habitats and their fragmentation would likely be much worse than it is. Many ICCAs are managed explicitly or implicitly to deal with ongoing loss of habitats, degradation and fragmentation. They help in slowing or halting such loss, and reversing it through regeneration of ecosystems and wildlife populations, and revival of agricultural diversity.

Indigenous peoples and local communities in many parts of the world have been

By 2020, the **rate of loss** of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and **degradation and fragmentation** is significantly reduced.

leading resistance to the industrial and commercial forces that drive habitat loss and fragmentation, such as through large-scale logging, conversion to palm oil and other plantations, mining, big hydropower projects, and so on. As their territories and areas are secured with tenurial rights and processes of self-determination, free prior informed consent (FPIC), and relevant capacities to self-govern, such resistance becomes quite strong, and provides the basis for the long-term security of ICCAs.





## Examples

- ▶ Community forests in Nepal and India, spread over several million hectares, have been instrumental in slowing, halting, or reversing forest degradation in many regions (see Targets 14 and 15). Using their entitlement to forests under the Forest Rights Act, several communities in India are resisting commercial logging, diversion of forest land for mining and dams, and other projects that they feel are ecologically and culturally destructive.<sup>17</sup>
- ▶ The territories of indigenous peoples covering a fifth of the closed-canopy forests of the Brazilian Amazon are reported to be the most important barrier to Amazon deforestation, partly due to active indigenous resistance to logging, agricultural expansion, and other threats.<sup>18</sup>
- ▶ The coastal communities of Trang off the Andaman Sea in southern Thailand, have created a 235-acre (~95 hectares) community-managed forest and sea-grass conservation zone, to help restore mangrove, coral and coastal ecosystems degraded by earlier mechanized fishing and other activities permitted by the government. Communities discourage or ban destructive fishing practices and encourage the planting of sea grass in lagoons, and mangrove seedlings in degraded areas. In the late 1990s dugong began to frequent again the coastal waters along the regenerated sea grass beds, becoming a flagship for conservation.<sup>19</sup>
- ▶ Several Spanish ICCAs won their right to protect their territory against potentially destructive projects. For instance, two Neighbour Common Woodlands (Cabral and Teis) were given awards by the Galician Organization of Neighbour Woodlands for their success in using their recognized land rights to stop two infrastructure projects that they considered harmful, one proposed by their municipality (Vigo) and another by AENA, the National Airport Management Agency.



### Sustainable fisheries

Most marine, coastal, and freshwater ICCAs are established and managed with sustainable fisheries as an objective, and many also aim to or result in the conservation of non-fished species.

Across the world, several traditional or artisanal fisher communities have strongly resisted the industrialization of fisheries, checked or helped government agencies to check illegal

By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem-based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, **fisheries** have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits.

commercial fishing and marine resource use, and carried out advocacy for policies that could strengthen community-based conservation and management approaches.

## Examples

- ▶ Sustainable use of coastal and marine resources is a feature of many ICCAs. For instance, the network of several hundred Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) in the south Pacific, and similar initiatives in Madagascar, Kenya, Spain, Japan and some countries of south-east Asia and Africa, have demonstrated the ability of coastal communities to responsibly manage such ecosystems.<sup>21</sup> (see also Targets 4 and 11)



Waya Island LMMA, Fiji. (Courtesy Stacy Jupiter)

► Marine Areas for Responsible Fishing in Costa Rica seek to recognize fishers' rights to jobs, participation and a healthy and ecologically balanced environment. The definition of such an area is: "...an area with significant sociocultural, fishery or biological characteristics in which fishing is especially regulated to ensure long-term use of fishery resources and in which the INCOPECSA can count on the support of coastal communities and/ or other institutions for its conservation, use and management." For example, one of the decisions of the Tárcoles Marine Area for Responsible Fishing was to establish a one-year ban on shrimp fishing by trawlers, artisan shrimp fishing or net fishing over an area extending from the coast to a depth of 15 meters. Only hand line fishing was legal during this period.<sup>22</sup>

# target seven

## Areas under sustainable management

► By 2020 areas under **agriculture, aquaculture and forestry** are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.



Deccan Development Society farmer with crop diversity, Andhra Pradesh, India. (Courtesy Ashish Kothari)

Many ICCAs encompass areas of primary economic production including agriculture, aquaculture/fisheries, and forestry; sustainable use that results in conservation is an explicit or implicit objective or one key outcome of the practices by which they are managed. The sustenance or revival of agricultural (crop and livestock) biodiversity is an objective of many ICCAs that are based on production landscapes.

However such landscapes are in many places threatened by landgrabbing and large land acquisitions by the private sector or the government, or by the intensification and chemicalisation of agriculture when communities get further integrated into national and global markets and governance mechanisms. Therefore, securing the rights of local communities of farmers, pastoralists, forest-dwellers and fishers, and providing them appropriate support and incentives, are of primary importance to maintain those models of sustainable practices.

In many parts of the world, conventional exclusionary protected areas have stopped or undermined traditional agriculture, fisheries, and forestry, leading to a loss of domesticated biodiversity and the associated knowledge, and sometimes even wild biodiversity whose existence was linked to production landscapes. In other areas, protected area strategies have actually maintained such

landscapes and their production practices because they contain significant wild plant and animal diversity. Of course, there have also been situations in which unsustainable local production processes have adversely affected biodiversity including wildlife, requiring governmental or community-based regulation and reduction or change in such activities.

## Examples

- ▶ Mixed terraced farming and forested landscapes in south-east Asia, territories of mobile/nomadic pastoralists in central Asia and north-eastern Africa, community-managed fisheries seasces such as LMMAs in south Pacific, town/community forests in USA, and community forests in south Asia, are in many cases examples of sustainably managed primary production systems.<sup>23</sup> (see also Targets 4, 11 and 13)
- ▶ Several community managed production landscapes in Europe (such as mixed pasture-woods systems in Spain and Croatia) are considered crucial for sustaining domesticated and wild biodiversity and the interface between the two; this includes even urban gardens and orchards with high biodiversity value. In Spain, the *dehesas* (semi-natural open forest privately or commonly owned, with several Mediterranean *Quercus* species, and pastures or cereal crops) are the main habitat for endangered or vulnerable species such as the Spanish imperial eagle *Aquila adalberti*, Cinereous vulture *Aegypius monachus* or the Iberian lynx *Lynx pardinus*, as also highly productive for goods like cork and grass, and services like leisure, hunting, and research.<sup>24</sup>
- ▶ Small-scale farmers (mostly women) of the Deccan Development Society in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India, conserve and use several dozen varieties of millets, rice, pulses and other crops through organic, biodiverse farming practices; they have applied for their area to be declared a Biodiversity Heritage Site under India's Biological Diversity Act.<sup>25</sup>
- ▶ The Satoyama and Satoumi landscapes of Japan are examples of production landscapes that integrate biodiversity, livelihood and socio-cultural aspects in ways that help sustain aquatic, agricultural, forest and other ecosystems.<sup>26</sup>

# target eight

## Pollution

In general, ICCAs are oriented to maintain healthy environments, free of damaging pollution of various kinds. More specifically, ICCAs encompassing agricultural landscapes often comprise efforts to reduce or eliminate the use of agricultural chemicals; some ICCAs may also include community

By 2020, **pollution**, including from excess nutrients, has been brought to levels that are not detrimental to ecosystem function and biodiversity.

mobilization to stop pollution from nearby industries or urban areas; and many involve dealing with solid and liquid wastes.

Conversely, many ICCAs are badly affected by pollution, and require support in dealing with this threat.



Traditional boat at Pongso no Tao, Taiwan. (Courtesy Ashish Kothari)

## Examples

- ▶ In several ICCAs, such as those of Jardhargaon and the proposed Biodiversity Heritage Site of Deccan Development Society, mentioned elsewhere in this document, there is a continuation or renewal of organic cultivation practices, thereby preventing or stopping the use of harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides.<sup>27</sup> (see also Targets 7 and 13)
- ▶ Fisher guilds of north-west Spain have protested oil spills caused by shipping, by going to court, organizing groups to clean up, and demanding greater regulation of the ships.<sup>28</sup>

▶ The Tao people of Pongso no Tao (Orchid Island) in Taiwan have struggled for many years against a nuclear waste dump that was forced on them; as a first step they have received some compensation, but they continue to ask for the waste to be removed.<sup>29</sup>

## target nine

### Invasive Alien Species

Invasive alien species affect many ecosystems and species that are encompassed within ICCAs. In several such sites, the threat that such invasives pose is well recognized by the governing communities, even while knowledge of

By 2020, **invasive alien species** and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment.

ecological dynamics and impacts may be partial. Where this recognition does exist, communities attempt to take action to reduce the threat of invasives, or seek help from outside agencies for the same.

## Examples

- ▶ Ecosystem planning and management in Australia's Indigenous Protected Areas include control of invasive weed and feral animal populations. For a country ravaged in many ways by invasives, this is a crucial activity that takes up a substantial part of the time of Indigenous rangers, and receives support from various agencies. (see also Targets 1, 11 and 20).
- ▶ At Gajna Significant Landscape in Croatia, abandonment of extensive grazing practice has led to a tendency of overgrowth by invasive species, a common problem in the Sava and Danube River flooded areas. The local community is assisted by an ecological group to stick to the traditional grazing, ensuring responsible water management, destroying the invasive species and conserving biodiversity.<sup>30</sup>
- ▶ In the Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Sanctuary and Tiger Reserve of southern India, Soliga indigenous people have reclaimed community rights to the forests, and are preparing a



management plan that includes traditional and new methods of controlling invasive species like Lantana that the conventional governmental management has not been able to control.<sup>31</sup>

- ▶ Some ICCAs in Spain such as the Santiago de Covelo Neighbour Woodlands in north-west Spain are eradicating or reducing their surface of Eucalyptus (earlier deliberately introduced by the government for industrial purposes in many parts of the country), and replacing it with indigenous species as part of their Forestry Plans.<sup>32</sup>

## 10 target ten

### Vulnerable ecosystems

Many community-managed sites in marine areas contain coral reefs, mangroves, and other vulnerable marine and coastal ecosystems, and help in their long-term conservation and management. Specific human activities that could cause damage, such as industrial resource use methods, dredging, oil and other pollution, excessive movement of vessels, land-based activities such as pesticide use, and others are regulated through the customary or formal rules that the community adopts.

#### Examples

- ▶ In Japan, fishery rights issued by the government allow exclusive access to coastal fishery resources for the license holder, and are treated as a non-transferrable property right under the fisheries legislation. The Fishery Cooperative Associations that receive those rights, in return, are expected to establish their collective rules for resource exploitation in the tenure area, and, among those rules they often see fit to include specific fishing limitations, including no-take zones. The term *sato-umi* has also been used to describe areas in the coastal sea where high productivity and biodiversity conservation are both sustained through human interaction, *i.e.* where people and coral reefs coexist sustainably and productively. Most such ICCAs or *sato-umi* are situated near the coastal residential areas where peer-monitoring can be carried out at a relatively low cost. A combination of secured restricted access and low costs of enforcement has made the phenomenon both common and successful in Japan.<sup>33</sup>
- ▶ Similar approaches are common to many community-managed marine and coastal areas around the world: Locally Managed Marine Areas in the south Pacific, Madagascar and Kenya, community fishery areas in south-east Asia, and others.<sup>34</sup>

By 2015, the multiple anthropogenic pressures on **coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems** impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized, so as to maintain their integrity and functioning.

Podolian cattle on Gajina pasture, Croatia. (Courtesy BED)



# Strategic Goal C

## ► Improve biodiversity

To **improve the status of biodiversity** by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity.

The achievement of biodiversity (including wildlife) conservation, including ecosystems, species and genetic diversity, is part of what defines and characterizes ICCAs. Across the world thousands of sites are attempting such conservation, or achieving it even where the primary objectives of managing the sites are different. For instance, many communities conserve catchment forests for their hydrological benefits, and in the process safeguard the ecosystem integrity and resilience; others may do the same with spiritual, ethical, or religious objectives and beliefs at the forefront.

In the case of marine areas, indigenous peoples and local communities have traditionally made more diverse use of coastal marine resources, alternatively using these resources throughout the year, and respecting their reproductive cycles.

Unfortunately, there is not nearly enough systematic research and documentation on the biodiversity benefits of ICCAs (especially compared to government designated protected areas). But what exists can be extrapolated to understand the tremendous contribution already being made, and the great potential for additional contribution if ICCAs can be made more secure.



## target eleven

### Protected areas ►

By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well **connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures**, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.

Sites that can be considered ICCAs are strong candidates for recognition as areas and initiatives of conservation importance. This could be either as protected areas, or as 'other effective area-based conservation measures', but in all such instances any inclusion into an officially recognized system must be only after the free and prior informed consent (FPIC) of the relevant peoples or communities has been obtained.



Sacred forest in Thailand.  
(Courtesy Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend)

Their inclusion also in networks of protection/conservation sites with diverse governance types and management categories can strengthen connectivity and ecological representation. A large landscape or seascape could be entirely conserved by various agencies including communities, government, and private parties; ICCAs would be central to such an approach that envisages a mosaic of various conservation units and corridors with different management objectives and governance arrangements.

ICCAs are in fact ideal for the achievement of this Target in many countries where conventional or government managed protected areas are facing opposition from communities who have been adversely affected by their creation. Many such countries cannot (and ought not to) significantly increase top-down exclusionary conservation due to knowledge of the negative consequences on people and growing hostility. Instead, governments can expand coverage of conservation sites through approaches like ICCAs, while helping them secure their contribution to conservation and well-being through appropriate recognition and support (see Conclusion). Indeed without ICCAs, it may be impossible to reach Target 11.

The global forest area under community conservation (about 500 million hectares) is at least as significant as the area conserved by state governments in forest protected areas.<sup>35</sup> This estimate takes into account the ancestral territories of first nations in North America and the Amazon, the *comunidades indígenas* and *ejidos* in Mexico, the indigenous forests and *páramos* of the Andean region, the forest-agriculture mosaics in South America, the village and collective forests and sacred groves of Africa and the community-managed and jointly-managed forests of Asia. The estimate of community conserved forests could double or triple if traditional agro-forestry or agro-pastoral systems and forest areas in Russia, Europe and the Middle East would be included. Projections based on available figures from about 25 countries suggest that ICCAs may cover as much or more area than currently covered by government designated and

Hirolo antelope, Ishaqbini, Kenya.  
(Courtesy Kenneth Coe)



managed protected areas.<sup>36</sup> Even in the coastal and marine environment, despite less visible recognition, the contribution of ICCAs is significant throughout the world.

Further, some ICCA proponents assert that this Aichi target is not ambitious enough, nor adequate to become a major force to stave off various global environmental challenges. The ambition should be greater, so that much more of the earth could become conservation-oriented, and this could happen with approaches like ICCAs.

For this, it is also important to develop further the concept and practice of 'other effective area-based conservation measures'. The lack of conceptual work on this has been noted by both the CBD and IUCN.<sup>37</sup> At its last meeting in October 2013, the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) identified "[t]he recognition and/or integration of indigenous and community conserved areas and private reserves in national protected area systems" as one of the existing scientific and technical gaps related to the implementation of Target 11,<sup>38</sup> and underscored the necessity of "[i]mproving information on other area-based conservation measures" as one of the areas that "would make a significant difference in our ability to monitor progress in order to guide appropriate/targeted action".<sup>39</sup> Similarly, at the most recent World Conservation Congress (September 2012, South Korea), IUCN called for the development of "criteria for what constitutes 'effective area-based

conservation measures', including for, *inter alia*, Private Protected Areas, Indigenous Peoples' Conserved Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (ICCAs), and Sacred Natural Sites (SNS)".<sup>40</sup> A renewed focus on

defining and identifying 'other effective area-based conservation measures' will greatly assist governments and civil society to bring about legislative, administrative, social and other ways to appropriately recognize and support ICCAs.<sup>41</sup>

## Examples<sup>42</sup>

- ▶ In Kenya, 65% of large mammals are on private and communal lands, outside of official protected areas; 10% of the remaining coastal forests are in sacred kayas groves established by local communities.
- ▶ In the south Pacific, about 500 Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) cover nearly 20,000 sq km of marine and coastal area in the countries of American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.<sup>43</sup>
- ▶ A fifth of the closed canopy forests in the Amazon are within recognised indigenous reserves and are shown to be crucial bulwarks against destructive logging, mining, and other threats.<sup>44</sup>
- ▶ In the Philippines, 60-65% of the forests are estimated to be within indigenous lands registered or claimed as Ancestral Domains, all or most of which could be considered ICCAs.
- ▶ In Namibia, Communal Conservancies now cover over 16% of the country's total land area, about the same as the formal government-managed protected area network; endangered species such as black rhino *Diceros bicornis* and cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus*, and the endemic Hartmann's mountain zebra *Equus zebra hartmannae*, are some of the species residing in these; black rhino numbers have increased considerably in Namibia's communal lands since the 1980s.
- ▶ Australia's 60 declared Indigenous Protected Areas cover just over 48 million hectares, around 36% of the country's National Reserve System (see also Targets 1, 9 and 20).<sup>45</sup>
- ▶ In Mexico, most forests of Oaxaca (one of the country's most biodiverse regions) are conserved by communities, and are crucial for jaguar *Panthera onca*, puma *Puma concolor*, toucan species, and others.<sup>46</sup>
- ▶ Iran In Iran, indigenous nomadic tribes have conserved territories spread over some 32 million hectares of the country's rangelands and some half of the country's forests. Sedentary communities, including indigenous coastal and desert peoples, also inhabit and conserve natural ecosystems. The ICCAs of Iran are in the process of being suitably recognised by the Department of the Environment specifically to meet the country's obligations under Aichi Target 11.
- ▶ In England, UK, community orchards are considered a priority conservation habitat, and over 40% of existing heathland is located within traditional commons.







## Preventing extinctions

Species conservation or protection is the explicit objective of several ICCAs, and where it is not, it is often an outcome; this includes in many cases threatened species. In the case of it being an explicit objective, such conservation takes place because of the cultural, spiritual or religious association of the community with the species, or because the community considers it ethically correct behaviour to protect 'guest' species, or because the species is of significant value to the community as a resource (for gathering/hunting, tourism, or other use). In other cases, threatened species benefit because the community conserves its habitat for any of a variety of other reasons.

By 2020 the extinction of known **threatened species** has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained.

ICCAs also incorporate significant local knowledge and practices that are crucial for an understanding of threats and needs of threatened species.

Iberian lynx in Dehesa, Spain. (Courtesy Manolo Moral Castro)



## Examples

- ▶ In Tibet (China), local organizations approved by the government have established their own community conserved areas, usually dedicated to a focal wildlife species (e.g., the Snow leopard *Uncia uncia*, Tibetan antelope *Pantholops hodgsonii*, Tibetan wild ass *Equus kiang*, Black necked crane *Grus nigricollis*), with specific regulations that define roles and responsibilities and penalties for poaching. This has been accompanied by environmental awareness initiatives in local schools and at community 'wildlife festivals'.<sup>47</sup>
- ▶ In Suriname, several marine or freshwater species including the West Indian manatee *Trichechus manatus*, the Guiana dolphin *Sotalia guianensis*, and sea turtles (several species), and many tree species benefit from community protection. Senegal has some marine ICCAs conserving threatened species. In Costa Rica, marine areas for responsible fishing have helped revive species earlier in decline, such as shrimps.<sup>48</sup>
- ▶ In Ethiopia, a stable population of the world's most endangered canid, the Ethiopian wolf *Canis simensis*, is protected in the Guassa-Menz Community Conserved Area.<sup>49</sup>
- ▶ In India, a number of threatened species including the Blyth's tragopan *Tragopan blithii*, Spotbilled pelican *Pelecanus philippensis*, Greater adjutant stork *Leptoptilos dubius*, Olive ridley turtle *Lepidochelys olivacea*, Blackbuck *Antelope cervicapra*, are protected by communities.<sup>50</sup>
- ▶ Other examples include: community protection of endangered sea turtles in south Asia and central America, a wide range of threatened species in European and east African ICCAs, narrowly endemic species in sacred sites in south Asia, crocodiles and dolphins in Senegal, vultures in Spain; sacred crocodile ponds of Gambia and Mali; certain tree species like arawone (*Tabebuia serratifolia*) in Suriname; marine turtle nesting sites in Chile, Costa Rica, Suriname, and several countries of South Asia.<sup>51</sup>



# target thirteen

## Genetic diversity

Linked to Target 7 above, ICCAs with agricultural and pastoral landscapes are strongly oriented towards the maintenance or enhancement of domesticated biodiversity, as also the continued links between this and 'wild' ecosystems and species including wild relatives of crops and livestock. ICCAs are often the locus of a mutually beneficial connection between wild and domesticated biodiversity (though not necessarily always, with human-wildlife and other conflicts also being part of the landscape).

By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.

The above is true for both settled agricultural systems, and shifting or mobile ones. In the latter case, in fact, temporal, seasonal or adaptive mobility is a way of not taxing the natural ecosystem and components like the soil or fodder resources, and typically is achieved through the maintenance of a diversity of species and breeds that are able to adapt to diverse conditions. The sustenance of such systems, some of them in existence for thousands of years, is crucial to the continuation of biological and genetic diversity of crops and livestock.

In many parts of the world, conventional exclusionary protected areas have neglected or undermined such traditions and practices, leading to a loss of domesticated biodiversity and to knowledge relating to such diversity. In other areas, protected area strategies have actually taken on board domesticated diversity as either an explicit objective in its own right, or as a means of maintaining ecosystems that contain significant wild plant and animal diversity.



Parque de la Papa landscape, Peru. (Courtesy Ashish Kothari)

## Examples

- ▶ Several European ICCAs conserve horticultural and livestock diversity as an explicit objective; south-East Asia's traditional rice terraced landscapes are home to significant wild and domesticated biodiversity; and the territories of mobile pastoralists in central Asia and north-eastern Africa contain vast landscapes where livestock and wildlife diversity are maintained.<sup>52</sup>
- ▶ In some Indian villages like Jardhargaon (Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand) in the Himalayan belt, the farmers involved in forest conservation are also the ones reviving a range of agro-biodiverse practices (such as trials of several hundred traditional varieties of rice, beans, and other crops), making connections between the state of the forest and the continuation of sustainable agriculture.<sup>53</sup>
- ▶ In the Peruvian Andes, the Quechua Indigenous Peoples have established a 'Potato Park'

as a biocultural heritage site where a mosaic of agricultural and natural ecosystems are sought to be conserved along with the revival of potato diversity in its place of origin.<sup>54</sup> The move by women farmers in southern India to have their area declared a Biodiversity Heritage Site has been mentioned above (Target 7).

- ▶ Common pastures in the The Lonjsko Polje Nature Park in the Sava River basin region of Croatia, are *de facto* managed by the local pastoralist communities through customary rules, and contain the highest concentration of indigenous breeds (horses, pigs, cattle) in the country, apart from a large number of rare and endangered wild plant and animal species.<sup>55</sup>

## Strategic Goal D

### ▶ Enhance the benefits to all

#### Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services

Given their explicit or implicit objectives, and the methods adopted by communities to achieve these objectives, likely to be maintain, revive, or enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions to varying levels of success. In particular, those functions that are of direct or indirect benefit to communities (hydrological functions figuring very commonly), would feature high on the list of objectives stated for conserving an area.



target

# fourteen

### Essential ecosystem services ▶

Several ICCAs are explicitly managed for maintaining or enhancing ecosystem functions such as securing watersheds, and result in enhanced social and economic well-being of the relevant communities. Many are oriented at regenerating or restoring such functions, where they have been diminished in the past through ecological degradation (see Target 5). Ecosystems that are found to be of new or additional value for functions such as new uses of medicinal plants, or ecotourism, are also subject to

By 2020, **ecosystems that provide essential services**, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.

ICCA like initiatives. Finally, maintenance of essential ecosystem functions leads to enhanced natural productivity in primary systems like agriculture and pastoralism, contributing to the well-being of resident and user populations, and consumers of relevant products.



In many (but by no means all) of these, the greater or special needs of women, the poor, or in other ways vulnerable sections of society are built into the governance and management practices. Where this was not the case in traditional systems, more recent changes brought in by exposure to new values of equity (e.g. on gender) are a feature of many ICCAs.



Planning forest ICCAs in Song Pan County, Sichuan, China. (Courtesy Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend)

It is interesting to note that the SCBD provided the following guidance to CBD COP10 (document COP/10/INF/12/Rev.1): "All terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems provide multiple ecosystem services. However some ecosystems, such as those that provide ecosystem services related to the provision of water, are particularly important in that they provide services that are essential for human wellbeing and specifically for the lives and livelihoods of women, and indigenous and local communities, including the poor and vulnerable. Accordingly, priority should be given to safeguarding or restoring such ecosystems, and to ensuring that people, especially women, indigenous and local communities and the poor and vulnerable, have adequate and secure access to these services."

In this context, ICCAs are eminently well-suited, since their governance and management by communities enables the connection between ecosystem functions and the poor and vulnerable far more likely than top-down, exclusionary government protected areas.

## Examples

- ▶ Community forests in many countries in Asia and Africa provide a host of ecological functions, including hydrological and nutrient flows. Across the Himalayan region in Nepal and India, or in the hill areas of Mexico, communities have traditionally conserved forests on the slopes, recognizing their value in providing such benefits.<sup>56</sup>
- ▶ Sacred natural sites under community governance are widespread across the world, and provide crucial cultural, psychological and well-being benefits.<sup>57</sup>
- ▶ In Japan, forests and other ecosystems upstream of a fishery production system are protected as 'fisher forests' or 'fish-breeding forests', to help optimise fish productivity through nutrient run-off and other beneficiary interlinkages.<sup>58</sup>
- ▶ The qanats are ancient water conservation and distribution systems in Iran and other parts of central Asia, and in many cases involve protection of their immediate surroundings that have natural vegetation and biodiversity.<sup>59</sup> Qanats are often found in ICCAs. They help indigenous peoples and local communities to conserve both wild and agro-biodiversity.
- ▶ Organic, nutritious and biologically diverse foods are supplied to residents and outside consumers from a number of ICCAs, such as the Potato Park of Peru and the Deccan Development Society of India, described elsewhere in this document (Targets 7 and 13).



# target fifteen

## Ecosystem resilience

As mentioned above, the conservation and maintenance of natural ecosystems is a key objective and achievement of ICCAs across the world. Equally important is the restoration and regeneration of degraded ecosystems. It is important to note however that these are rarely (and traditionally, obviously never) explicitly stated as being for mitigation and adaptation to climate change (even though leading to such outcomes), and very recent terms like 'carbon stocks' are usually not in the vocabulary of peoples and communities managing ICCAs.

Viewing ICCAs as contributors to climate change mitigation and adaptation may be important as a means of warding off threats to them, but it would be crucial not to forget that their primary objectives have been socio-cultural and ethical, livelihood

By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to **climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification**.

security, direct ecosystem functions, and so on. Ongoing attempts at linking ICCAs with programmes such as REDD are fraught with such danger, for they could lead to commoditization, commercialization, and market penetration in the absence of clear tenurial security and community governance.

ICCAs are at the vanguard of humanity's shield against the destructive impacts of climate change, already contributing to the restoration target mentioned above, and likely to contribute more effectively if appropriately recognized and supported.



## Examples

(Note: It is important to assert that communities in the following examples are *not* managing these sites to deal with climate issues, but for many other reasons, and climate resilience is more a byproduct)

- ▶ Millions of hectares of degraded forested lands have been regenerated by communities, either on their own initiative such as the several thousand community forests in India and Bangladesh, or under government-supported programmes such as joint forest management in India and community forestry in Nepal. These initiatives have contributed to ecosystem resilience and restoration, and are likely to have provided substantial climate benefits.<sup>60</sup>
- ▶ The Kayapo indigenous territory and Xingu Indigenous Park in the Brazilian Amazon, at 14 million

hectares the largest conserved tropical forest area in the world, have been crucial in halting the degradation of the Amazon by fires, logging, ranching, and other threats including a proposed World Bank funded dam; this area is likely to be sequestering over a billion tons of carbon.<sup>61</sup>

- ▶ Mobile and nomadic communities in dryland areas of central Asia and the Horn of Africa, the Arctic circle, and upland regions of central Asia, are demonstrating a series of adaptation to radical shifts in climate in recent times, using sophisticated local knowledge systems that embed long-term adaptability, at times in combination with what modern knowledge can contribute.<sup>62</sup> In Spain, extensive mobile pastoralism contributes significantly to soil fertilization and seed dispersal (longitudinal and altitudinal), helping in climate adaptation and recovery of degraded ecosystems.<sup>63</sup>
- ▶ The traditional territory of the Udege indigenous people in the province of Primorsky in Russia's Far East has an initiative for sustainable harvesting of pine nuts and other forest produce, that combines livelihoods with the conservation of the forest along the Bikin river, including by staving off commercial logging pressure; a part of the revenues for this is being generated by sale of carbon credits.<sup>64</sup>

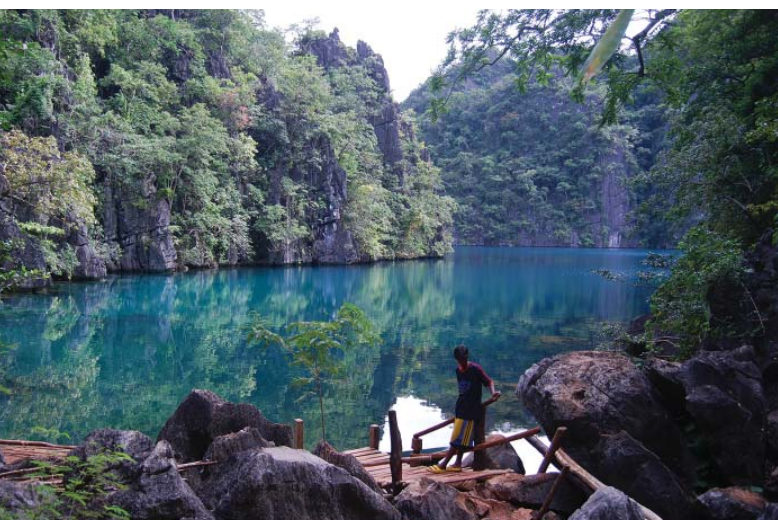


16 target

# sixteen

## Nagoya Protocol on ABS

ICCAs often provide best practices of secure access (of communities) to



Coron Island, The Philippines.  
(Courtesy Ashish Kohari)

By 2015, the **Nagoya Protocol** on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation.

biodiversity and bioresources, and benefits generated out of their conservation (including sustainable use). They also regulate (or have the potential to regulate) access by outsiders, and negotiate benefit-sharing arrangements of various kinds. They could therefore be strong participants in the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, providing examples to other protected area and conservation governance types, especially if key issues relating to rights, tenurial security, FPIC, and negotiating powers of communities are dealt with, and if 'benefits' are seen beyond financial returns to include other material and non-material returns.

## Examples

- ▶ The Gond *adivasi* (indigenous) community of Mendha (Gadchiroli, Maharashtra, India) has organised itself to achieve self-rule, in the spirit of the country's Constitution. A *gram sabha* (village assembly of all residents) takes all decisions through consensus, based on information provided by *abhyas gats* (study circles involving villagers and outsiders).

## Examples

Three decades back it took de facto control over 1800 ha of forests that had long been under government control for commercial exploitation. It halted exploitation by outside agencies, stopped forest encroachment, controlled fire, and in 2009 finally gained legal control over the entire forest under the Forest Rights Act. It now earns from sustainable harvesting of forest produce, and making a plan for conservation and sustainable use.<sup>65</sup>

- ▶ The Tagbanwa people of Coron (Palawan, the Philippines) have established strict use regulations for the islands they inhabit. The forest resources are to be used for domestic purposes only. Ten of the twelve freshwater lakes of the island but two are sacred, with access restricted to community members only (usually for religious and cultural purposes and some resource uses). Two lakes can be visited by foreigners, but only at prescribed times. The Tagbanwa youth are well organised to maintain the cleanliness of the sites and demand respect of regulations concerning behaviour, noise, garbage, etc. The income from tourism is used to support education and health expenditures.<sup>66</sup>
- ▶ Biocultural Community Protocols (BCP) have been used in several communities as a set of clear terms and conditions regulating access to the knowledge and resources of an indigenous people or local community. The BCP is usually developed through a consultative process and outlines relevant core cultural and spiritual values and customary laws. Communities that develop their own BCP need to discuss how the various elements of their life— such as territories, landscape, genetic resources, TK, culture, spirituality, and customary laws— are all connected and interdependent. They then identify common challenges and desired futures. With input from NGOs with legal expertise, communities then learn about the rights that they possess under international and national law. Culturally appropriate responses are then devised, as well as terms for engagement. Examples of BCPs in the context of ICCAs include Ulu Papar (Sabah, Malaysia) and the Kukula Traditional Health Practitioners (Bushbuckridge, South Africa).<sup>67</sup>

## Strategic Goal €

### ▶ Enhance implementation

**Enhance implementation** through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building

ICCAs have their own institutions for natural resources governance and management (though not always fully equitable, especially gender-wise), and use of local knowledge (with or without outside knowledge). In many, especially those that involve recent or ongoing struggles at securing the ICCA, there are also strong elements of capacity building by communities themselves or with outsiders. ICCAs in fact provide many lessons in capacity building and knowledge sharing compared to the more exclusionary, top-down protected area models that many countries have adopted.



# target seventeen

## NBSAPs

Given that ICCAs are a key pathway to biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of biological diversity, and equity in access and benefit-sharing (the three pillars of the CBD, and consequently of national biodiversity strategy and action plans, or NBSAPs), their inclusion in NBSAPs is highly desirable. This means both that NBSAPs should include

By 2015 each Party has developed, adopted as a policy instrument, and has commenced implementing an effective, participatory and updated **national biodiversity strategy and action plan**.

strategies/actions on how to recognize and support ICCAs, as also that the relevant communities should be involved in the formulation of the NBSAPs. More generally, NBSAPs should address the diversity and quality of governance of natural resources.

## Examples<sup>68</sup>

- ▶ Several countries of the southern Pacific have incorporated Locally Managed Marine Areas or other marine ICCAs into their NBSAPs; this includes Solomon Islands, Samoa, and Fiji (see Targets 4 and 6).
- ▶ Papua New Guinea's NBSAP makes provision for empowering landowners to do conservation, which has potential for areas that could be considered ICCAs.
- ▶ Australia's NBSAP includes actions relevant to promoting Indigenous Protected Areas (see Target 1).
- ▶ Namibia's NBSAP strongly promotes communal conservancies (see Target 2).
- ▶ The Philippines is in the process of incorporating ICCAs into its revised NBSAP, as a key strategy to counter habitat loss (see Target 2). One of the indicators specified to meet the target of expanding ecosystems under the PA system is the number of ICCAs documented and recognised.







# target eighteen

## Traditional knowledge

ICCAs epitomize the strengths and ongoing relevance of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices. Countries that are increasingly recognizing ICCAs through national or subnational laws, policies, and programmes (including NBSAPs, wildlife action plans, etc) are explicitly or implicitly respecting traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities. Conversely, the more general recognition of such knowledge, innovations and practices leads to greater security for ICCAs.

### Examples

▶ In Malaysia, the Department of Fisheries has endorsed the indigenous management system, Tagal, for maintaining the productivity of riverine fisheries, and enabling recovery in areas affected by extensive logging and destructive fishing methods. Wherever Tagal is enforced, no fishing is allowed for a length of time and, when the prohibition is lifted, the catch is shared equally amongst members of the community. By 2012, the number of Tagal areas established in Sabah had multiplied to 212 involving 107 rivers in eleven districts.<sup>69</sup> The Winokok forest of Bundu Tuhan, an indigenous Dusun community in Sabah, is a communal Native Reserve at the southern boundary of Kinabalu Park, Malaysia's first World Heritage Site. It has formed a team of community researchers engaged in participatory mapping, biodiversity monitoring and other ways of assessing the situation of the forest.

▶ The customary practices of the Inuit of Nunavut (Canada) have helped conserve wildlife and secure livelihoods over vast expanses based on ancestral and evolving knowledge of the movements and habits of various species. These have been integrated into a series of management plans recognized by the government, for national parks and other land uses, and for cultural heritage; an example is the plan for the Auyuittuq National Park in Canada's eastern Arctic area. Similar collaborative work between the First Nations and

By 2020, the **traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities** relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.



Explaining traditional conservation practices in Burkina Faso. (Courtesy Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend)

scientific agencies on understanding and monitoring climate change, for instance the *Atlas of Community-Based Monitoring in a Changing Arctic*, is providing valuable insights<sup>70</sup>.

- ▶ In southwest Madagascar, a large number of dry forests of exceptional biodiversity value are managed de facto by local communities according to ancestral rules passed on through generations. These include forest areas that are considered sacred (*tabou*), which can be used only as burial ground and as a last resort in case of crises.<sup>71</sup>
- ▶ Several laws in Spain recognize traditional customs and management, e.g. regarding Woodland ICCAs, article 11.3 of Law 10/200635 which modified Law 43/2003 on Woodlands, acknowledges collective property and provides special legal status to it as inalienable, non-transferable and tax-exempt.<sup>72</sup>



## target nineteen

### Biodiversity knowledge

Networks that involve peoples and communities governing ICCAs are in many countries and regions sharing, transferring, and helping apply relevant knowledge and technologies. Where these networks also involve other civil society organizations and individuals, government agencies, academic institutions, etc., the knowledge/technology sharing and transmission is wider.

It should be noted however that indigenous peoples and local communities seldom have

**By 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies** relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied.

access to and benefit from modern scientific research about topics directly affecting them, such as climate change. Academics should therefore make sure to disseminate their findings also amongst them, especially when conducting field research on their territories and ICCAs.<sup>73</sup> Even more preferable is if the research is conducted with or through communities as equal partners. A combination of traditional and modern knowledge can be powerful, as noted in Target 18 above.

### Examples

- ▶ The Fiji Locally Managed Marine Areas Network performs a number of functions including the establishment of community and network research priorities and protocols that govern any collaborating researchers, minimum monitoring approaches for network and community purposes, communications and intellectual property issues, membership criteria, maintaining a site database, library of research and monitoring results.<sup>74</sup>
- ▶ During the process for the recognition of the Tárcoles Marine Area for Responsible Fishing, the information used to back up the proposal was based on the database run by Coope Tárcoles R.L. on their catch and a record of influencing factors such as the moon. This is the first artisan fisher initiative in Costa Rica and it is the first to develop a participative zoning plan.<sup>75</sup>
- ▶ Two ICCAs in northern Okinawa, Japan, specifically target an emperor fish (*Lethrinus nebulosus*), using information and protocols jointly developed by fishers and marine scientists. They have been declared no-take zones because it is difficult to distinguish for this species while catching others. These rules are seasonal and aim at protecting young fish when the

fish aggregate in the sea-grass beds. These ICCAs started in 2000 and demonstrated great results, with increased catch of mature fish and decreased catch of immature ones.<sup>76</sup>

- ▶ At the global level, the ICCA Consortium provides a forum for the collation, exchange, and enhancement of knowledge relating to ICCAs; and the Sacred Natural Sites Initiative for similar processes relating to such sites.<sup>77</sup>
- ▶ The World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP) and the GEF Small Grants Programme have produced a toolkit to enhance community capacity to secure their ICCAs.<sup>78</sup>



## target twenty

### Resource mobilization

ICCAs often mobilize their own resources, or are funded by a variety of sources; some countries have schemes targeted at ICCAs or the relevant peoples/communities and their territories. But many ICCAs are also short of financial resources. All these experiences are relevant to the target of raising adequate funding to implement the Strategic Plan. Crucially, international donors and countries need to recognize the importance of including ICCAs in the targets for fund-raising and generation of financial resources.

It also seems to be self-evident, although not many studies appear to have been done on this, that ICCAs are more cost-effective than

By 2020, at the latest, the mobilization of **financial resources** for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 from all sources, and in accordance with the consolidated and agreed process in the Strategy for Resource Mobilization, should increase substantially from the current levels. This target will be subject to changes contingent to resource needs assessments to be developed and reported by Parties.

government-managed areas. A significant part of the monitoring, surveillance, physical and other works, is being carried out with voluntary contributions; this stands to reason, as ICCAs are often a matter of crucial survival, even life and death, for indigenous peoples and local communities. Caring for their traditional territories is often just an integral part of every-day life, and not considered a separate task in many such initiatives.

### Examples (see also Target 3)

- ▶ Sites managed for ecotourism in Suriname and Kenya, and areas managed for sustainable hunting and ecotourism like Namibia's Communal Conservancies, are examples of revenue mobilisation by communities.<sup>79</sup>
- ▶ In Iran, the government gives formal recognition to community rangers, and has included assistance to ICCAs in the 5th Five Year Development Plan. UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme funds as well as European Commission assistance are supporting ICCA activities.<sup>80</sup> A significant innovation is the self-creation of community investment funds based on customary governance models for strengthening ICCAs.
- ▶ The Australian Government provides substantial funding to Indigenous Protected Areas as part of an ongoing IPA Programme.<sup>81</sup> (see also Targets 1, 9, 11)
- ▶ Several international agencies, donors, and civil society organizations raise funds to support ICCAs; the GEF Small Grants Programme has made ICCAs one of its global priorities.

# Conclusion

ICCAs can and do help in achieving each of the Aichi Targets, and are therefore a crucial component of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity in specific and the CBD in general. Furthermore, in the contribution they make to the survival, livelihoods, and well-being of indigenous peoples and local communities around the world, they are important for the implementation of a number of other global agreements and treaties on environment and human rights, including UNDRIP. Finally, in so far as they help safeguard the ecological integrity of a substantial part of the earth, they provide ecological benefits to humanity as a whole. For all these reasons it makes sense for governments, civil society, and other actors to direct more attention to ICCAs than has been the case so far.

ICCAs have faced and continue to be challenged by a number of serious threats, and need support in dealing with these. Securing their future, and their enhanced contribution to the achievement of the Aichi Targets, requires that government agencies, donors, civil society organizations, and others undertake the following steps<sup>82</sup>

- ▶ Help concerned peoples/communities to **document and evaluate** ICCAs and their contributions to conservation, livelihoods, and well-being, and make these known and appreciated by the public
- ▶ Assist the ICCA peoples/communities to gain **recognition of their land, water, and biocultural resource rights**
- ▶ Recognize the **local institutions governing the ICCAs**, while helping them to **self-evaluate and strengthen the quality of their governance** (e.g., gender and class equity, transparency, effectiveness)
- ▶ Strengthen, reform or frame national laws and policies that **recognize indigenous peoples and local communities as legal actors** possessing **common rights**, and **their indivisible, inalienable and perpetual rights to territory and resources**
- ▶ Emphasize that ICCAs are **living links between biological and cultural diversity**, and assist in changes that may be necessary to achieve universal objectives of equity and justice
- ▶ Provide **assistance in technical aspects of management** including enforcement of rules and regulations, if required and sought by the community, through respectful, cross-cultural dialogue between “traditional” and “modern” (or ‘external’ and ‘local’) knowledge
- ▶ Help **resist threats to ICCAs** from outside or within the people/community, including by building legal capacity, providing relevant information, and seeking **special status** (e.g. off-limits to destructive activities, “ecologically important”, part of the national protected area system, etc., as appropriate)
- ▶ Facilitate **knowledge of the full implications of financial and economic measures** meant to support ICCAs, in particular new mechanisms related to climate change, ecosystem services, etc.; and ensure that the people/community have full capacity to take their own decisions
- ▶ Support activities that strengthen local **livelihoods and food sovereignty / security**, sensitive to local environmental conditions, and building on local skills, institutional arrangements, and knowledge
- ▶ Provide or strengthen socio-cultural, economic and political **incentives** for conserving the ICCA while seeking to maintain the independence and autonomy of the relevant people/community
- ▶ Provide special **support to young people** caring for ICCAs and resisting the many forces alienating them; facilitate locally relevant, **culturally sensitive health and education services** that incorporate local languages and knowledge
- ▶ Respect and strengthen **local, traditional or indigenous knowledge**, and protect

it against piracy and misuse; facilitate its evolution in complementary partnership with formal, modern knowledge, in particular to fill gaps, or to deal with local inequities

- ▶ Respect local notions of **time and pace**, and the need for change to take place as a **process** rather than as a project
- ▶ Support **networking among ICCAs**, and **alliances** among indigenous peoples ,

local communities, human rights advocates and development and conservation practitioners

- ▶ Support **peace and reconciliation** efforts that respect local communities and their ties to their territories/lands/waters
- ▶ Facilitate the **empowerment of women, landless people, minorities**, and other weaker sections of peoples/communities, to take part in decision-making.

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