



The 'do's and don'ts' of supporting forest conservation and restoration initiatives by local communities and indigenous peoples¹

Introduction: the importance of appropriate support for forest conservation and restoration initiatives by indigenous peoples and local communities

Forest conservation and restoration is a very important strategy for halting biodiversity loss, mitigating climate change, and securing the continued availability of essential products and resources for more than 1.5 billion people who depend on forests directly or indirectly for their daily livelihood and other needs.²



The Indigenous Territory of Guna Yala, Panama. Photo: Marcial Arias

It is broadly recognised that indigenous peoples and local communities play an essential role in forest conservation and restoration. *“When users are genuinely engaged in decisions regarding rules affecting their use, the likelihood of them following the rules and monitoring others is much greater than when an authority simply imposes rules.”*³ In fact, recent research⁴ indicates that

¹ This report has been prepared by Simone Lovera, in consultation with the active members of the Task Force on Communities and REDD (which is constituted under the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policies (CEESP)'s Theme on Governance, Equity and Rights (TGER)), and members of the Global Forest Coalition (a worldwide coalition of mainly southern NGOs and Indigenous Peoples' Organisations), with inputs from members of the International Consortium on Indigenous Conserved Territories and Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCA Consortium). It reflects the outcomes of a seminar with representatives of Indigenous Peoples, Peasant movements and other local community representatives that took place on 29 November 2011 in Durban, South Africa. For more information, please contact simonelovera@yahoo.com.

² <http://www.fao.org/forestry/livelihoods/en/>

³ Ostrom, E., and Nagendra, H., 2006. Insights on Linking Forests, Trees, and People from the Air, on the Ground, and in the Laboratory. Papers of the National Academy of Sciences, vol. 103, no. 51, pp. 19224 – 19231, <http://www.pnas.org/content/103/51/19224.abstract>

⁴ Porter-Bolland, L., Ellis, E., Guariguata, M., Ruiz-Mallen, I., Negrete-Yankelevich, S. and Reyes-Garcia, V., 2011. Community Managed Forests and Forest Protected Areas, An Assessment of their Conservation Effectiveness across

areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities are less prone to forest loss than formally protected areas. Where local users are excluded from forests or where their rights are compromised, conflict may arise threatening the sustainability of forest management. For these and other reasons, numerous national and international forest policies, including policies to Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and Enhance Forest Carbon Stocks (REDD+) have emphasised the need to support forest conservation and restoration initiatives by indigenous peoples and local communities.

However, despite the fact that there is a broad consensus amongst policy-makers supporting this approach, there has been remarkably little analysis of appropriate ways of promoting such initiatives. The overriding approach has been to develop a set of social and environmental standards. By focusing on the status quo these fail to address weak governance including the lack of title that undercut conservation. They also are non-binding, which means they are impossible to enforce, especially in countries that already struggle with lack of law enforcement and other governance problems. For this reason, the Global Forest Coalition and the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)'s REDD and Communities Task Force⁵ have initiated a joint investigation into the 'do's and don'ts' of supporting forest conservation and restoration initiatives by indigenous peoples and local communities.

This work builds on previous analysis of the 'do's and don'ts' of supporting Indigenous Conserved Territories and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) conducted by the ICCA Consortium;⁶ and a preliminary analysis of key factors that have contributed to the success of community and indigenous peoples' initiatives to conserve and restore forests, which the Global Forest Coalition (GFC) conducted in 2010. The results of these projects and a series of initial interviews with indigenous community representatives were summarised in a discussion paper. This paper formed the basis for an interactive, open workshop with representatives of local communities and indigenous peoples, which took place on 29 November 2011 in Durban, South Africa. The workshop was attended by over 35 representatives of indigenous Peoples, peasant movements, women's groups, trade unions and NGOs, especially from Africa. They were asked to give a response to the following questions:

1. Please give a brief description of your indigenous peoples' or community initiative(s) to conserve and restore forests, and say why you consider it a success in terms of: social impacts (taking into account gender aspects and differentiated impacts on different ethnic groups), ecological impacts, and (bio-)cultural impacts.
2. In your view what are the factors that have contributed most to this success?
3. What forms of support, policies and/or incentives from outside the community/tribe have contributed most to this success?
4. What policies, incentives or other factors have formed an obstacle to the success of the initiative?
5. What social conflicts are affecting your ability to manage/conservate your area? How do you resolve such conflicts? What methods for conflict resolution have worked best?
6. What would your recommendation be as far as the 'do's and 'don'ts' of supporting indigenous peoples' and community initiatives to conserve and restore their forests are concerned?

This report reflects the suggestions, recommendations and other views on appropriate ways to support their initiatives to conserve and restore forests of representatives of Indigenous Peoples and local communities themselves. Often, discussions about REDD+ and other forest policy mechanisms are dominated by national and international NGOs, governments, researchers and international financial institutions that come with their own pre-set ideas about what kind of support is needed. As noted during the workshop this was one of the few opportunities where representatives of -movements of- local people could present their own views on what kind of support they actually want.

the Tropics. In *Forest Ecology and Management*, Elsevier, 2011. In press.

http://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/articles/AGuariguata1101.pdf

⁵ This task force is formally incorporated under the IUCN's Theme on Governance, Equity and Rights.

⁶ <http://www.iccaforum.org>

Getting to the Roots: motivations to conserve and restore forests

The Global Forest Coalition's analysis⁷ of factors contributing to the success of community and indigenous peoples' initiatives to conserve and restore forests revealed a broad range of incentives and motivations. This analysis was based on case studies, national research, and national workshops with representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities in seven different countries: Uganda, Tanzania, Colombia, Panama, Brazil, India and Nepal. It also took into account the results of more than 43 national workshops on the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation that were organised by members and partners of GFC between 2006 and 2010.

Some of the most important motivating factors for indigenous peoples and traditional local communities are traditional and spiritual value systems. Forests are not considered in a reductive, mechanical way by indigenous peoples. Rather they are an integral part of peoples' and communities' existence and identity, intrinsic to life itself, both practically and spiritually: the forests are central to many indigenous peoples' traditions and culture, and are a source of food, medicines and building materials. For some the forest is also home to their gods, and of great spiritual importance.

Thus indigenous peoples across the world are highly motivated to conserve forests and restore those damaged by others: indigenous peoples identify themselves as custodians of Mother Earth (*'Pachamama'* in Andean cultures).

The workshops and case studies from Nepal and Tanzania also demonstrated the importance of community management in general. In Nepal, more than one fifth of the country's forests are managed by local communities. These forests provide the communities with resources and

Drivers of forest loss, Payments for Environmental Services schemes, and polycentric governance

Successful forest governance is the result of effective institutions at multiple levels. Local, national and international institutions all play an important role in forest policy.

While local institutions including indigenous peoples' customary and traditional institutional structures play an important role in actual forest management, strong national and international institutions are needed to address many of the drivers of forest loss. These drivers are often the result of international commodity markets or national legislative and policy flaws favouring dominant economic interests.

However, despite the availability of a significant body of research concerning the drivers of forest loss and the need for strong, polycentric governance structures to address these drivers¹, there has been a rather simplistic assumption in the REDD+ discussion that the most effective way of motivating forest conservation efforts is to compensate private land owners for the opportunity costs of not destroying forests. Aside from the question of whether such compensation is morally defensible, and the fact that it is a highly inefficient way of conserving forests from an economic perspective, it is also doubtful whether direct payments to private forest owners are the most effective way of motivating forest conservation and restoration efforts.

In fact, as noted in this discussion paper, payments to private land owners might even play a negative role, as they risk undermining the very traditional value systems and community governance structures that have formed the cornerstones of successful initiatives to conserve and restore forests by indigenous peoples and local communities.

1) See also Ostrom, E. and Mwangi, E., 2011. Polycentric Governance of Ecosystems. International Journal of the Commons. In press.

⁷ Hall, R. (ed.) 2010. Getting to the Roots, Underlying Causes of Deforestation and forest Degradation and Drivers of Forest Restoration, Global Forest Coalition, Amsterdam, 2010, <http://www.globalforestcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Report-Getting-to-the-roots1.pdf>

livelihoods, yet still suffer less degradation than government-managed forests.

Both in Nepal and India, communities also emphasised the need for a strong and supportive legislative framework that fully recognises the value of community forest governance systems. It was noted that women play an especially important role in forest management, and that it is necessary to challenge the patriarchal system in which many women live, to enable them to play an active role in forest conservation and restoration.

Awareness of the role of forests in sustaining livelihoods and providing both wood and non-timber forest products formed another important motivation for many indigenous peoples and local communities. This has also prompted communities to embrace agro-forestry and agro-ecology initiatives that can be implemented in harmony with forest conservation initiatives. In Tanzania, for example, community members from the village of Kongwa explained that they had been encouraged to restore their forests because of the important role these restored forests play in sustaining their livelihoods. Following restoration they also noticed a decline in soil erosion, easier availability of medicinal plants and bushmeat, and an increase in the flow of water from springs.

Communities in different countries highlighted awareness of the role that forests play in regulating water flows as a particularly important incentive. In Colombia, communities emphasised that they attached great importance to forests because of the role they played in providing water, biodiversity and food resources, as well as regulating the local climate. In Brazil especially, awareness of forests' role in water regulation was seen as a cornerstone underpinning the success of large-scale community driven forest restoration efforts, including the highly successful '*Cultivando água boa*' program in the Atlantic forest (which has already triggered the restoration of 100,000 hectares of forests and 500 kilometres of riparian forest).

In general, awareness building and education were seen as very important incentives by local communities and indigenous peoples. Increased awareness of the important role forests play in sustaining livelihoods, biodiversity and water resources, combined with increased awareness of the direct and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, often creates enough motivation to trigger local community initiatives to conserve and restore forests.

Last but not least, most indigenous peoples and community representatives highlighted the fact that the main challenge was to protect their areas and their rights against external drivers of forest loss, including the expansion of plantations, large-scale logging, mining, and the corruption and illegal practices that often go hand in hand with such direct drivers.

"Indigenous People have always considered that this land is sacred and that the welfare and health of the planet depend on their health and conservation. This is the vision that has and is still motivating our communities to maintain the conservation and restoration of our territories. We are seeking to recover usurped ancestral lands, and to restore their vitality, to recreate the forests as they once were, before the expansion of Western agriculture and deforestation."

Geodisio Castillo, an indigenous participant during the workshop on the underlying causes of forest loss and incentives for forest conservation, organised by Asociación Indígena Ambiental and the Global Forest Coalition in Panama in 2010 (Hall (ed.), 2010).

The 'do's and don'ts' of supporting indigenous conserved territories and community conserved areas

Indigenous Peoples' Conserved Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (ICCAs) are natural and/or modified ecosystems that are highly significant in terms of biodiversity, ecological services and culture. They are voluntarily conserved by

indigenous peoples and local communities, both sedentary and mobile, through customary laws or other effective means. The defining characteristics of ICCAs are⁸:

- A community or people is closely connected to a well defined ecosystem (or to a species and its habitat) culturally and/or because of survival and dependence for livelihood.
- The management decisions and efforts of the indigenous people/local community lead to the conservation of the ecosystem's habitats, species, ecological services and associated cultural values, even when the conscious objective of such management may not be conservation *per se*. It might, for instance, be related to material livelihood concerns, water security, or the safeguarding of cultural and spiritual places, etc.
- The community or people is the major player in decision-making (governance) and implementation regarding the management of the site, implying that customary and community institutions have the capacity to enforce regulations; in many situations there may be other stakeholders in collaboration or partnership, but primary decision-making rests with the concerned community or people.

What do the stewards of ICCAs want? Active community and indigenous members of the ICCA Consortium, which was established in 2010 as a consortium of Indigenous Peoples' Organisations and civil society groups promoting effective support for ICCAs, have formulated the following key demands:

- Formal recognition of land, water and natural resource rights.
- Recognition and respect for the organisations governing ICCAs.
- Protection against encroachments from outside and imposed development initiatives.
- Support to engage and inspire community youth.
- Support to generate livelihoods.
- Support to meet the conservation challenges of the ICCA.
- Support for organising and networking.

The IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy and the ICCA Consortium subsequently identified the following recommendations to external actors who want to support ICCAs:⁹

Do's and Don'ts in recognising and supporting ICCAs	
Do's	Don'ts
Help the concerned communities to document their ICCAs and make them known and appreciated, if this is requested and/or agreed upon by them.	Do not research or disseminate ICCA information without the free, prior and informed consent of the relevant communities, as defined by them.
Assist communities managing ICCAs to gain recognition of their land, water, and bio-cultural resource rights (property, custodianship, use), including by supporting their claims to such rights through maps, demarcation, historical records, etc.	Do not impose top-down governance regimes upon ICCAs, including co-management/shared governance regimes; do not acquiesce when rights have been taken by force or ignored.
Recognise the local institutions governing the ICCAs, while helping them to self-evaluate and strengthen the quality of their governance (indicated by, for example, gender and class equity, transparency, accountability, and effectiveness).	Do not undermine or displace functioning ICCA governance institutions or impose new institutions upon endogenous bodies and rules.
Strengthen national laws and policies that recognise indigenous peoples and local communities as legal actors possessing common rights.	Do not neglect communities in state legal systems (e.g., by recognising as legal subjects only state bodies, individuals, and corporate actors)
Emphasise that ICCAs are living links between biological and cultural diversity, stressing history, ancestral territories, and cultural identity, as well as their continuing evolution and adaptation.	Do not overtly or implicitly promote cultural uniformity, narrow-mindedness, intolerance, ethnic disrespect, or any type of discrimination and prejudice against "the others."

⁸ <http://www.iccaforum.org/>

⁹ Borrini-Feyerabend, G., 2010. Strengthening What Works – Recognising and Supporting the Conservation Achievements of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. CENESTA, Tehran, 2010.

Provide coherent support and backing to communities enforcing ICCA regulations, in particular to apprehend violators and have them judged and sanctioned in fair and consistent ways.	Do not leave communities alone to carry the burden of surveillance and repressing violations, in particular when the ICCA rules match and enforce state rules.
Provide means for joint, constructive evaluation of ICCAs by concerned communities, civil society, and government administrations, focusing on outputs and impacts for conservation, livelihoods, governance, and cultural and spiritual values.	Do not evaluate ICCAs in isolation from their concerned communities or solely or mostly in terms of compliance with external expectations (eg. types of committee, rules, and plans).
Provide assistance in technical aspects of management, if required and sought by the community, through respectful, cross-cultural dialogue between different knowledge systems, including mutual validation where necessary.	Do not impose management objectives, legal categories, or technical expertise that undermine ICCAs' local meaning and value; do not validate traditional knowledge by 'scientific' knowledge as a one-way process.
Help prevent and mitigate threats to ICCAs from outside and within the community, including by seeking special status for ICCAs (eg. as off-limits to destructive activities, 'ecologically important', or as part of the national protected area system).	Do not impose protected area status or any other special status on an ICCA without the free, prior and informed consent of the relevant indigenous peoples or local communities as decided and controlled by them.
Support local sustainable livelihoods activities, whether or not they are linked to the ICCAs, ensuring that distribution of benefits is equitable and that any integration with the market economy is culturally appropriate and desired by the community.	Do not formally recognise ICCAs in ways that diminish local livelihoods or support development that undermines ICCAs (eg. inappropriate tourism and other initiatives that see nature and culture as commodities).
Provide or strengthen socio-cultural, political, and economic incentives for conserving ICCAs, while seeking to maintain their independence and autonomy.	Do not displace or undermine existing motivations for supporting ICCAs or make ICCAs entirely or primarily dependent on outside economic incentives.
Provide special support to young people contributing to ICCAs and facilitate locally relevant, culturally-sensitive health and education services that incorporate local languages and knowledge.	Do not support health and education services that are culturally insensitive, irresponsive to local contexts and livelihoods, and/or disruptive of local identities.
Respect and strengthen local, traditional knowledge, protect it against piracy and misuse, and facilitate its evolution in complementary partnership with other forms of knowledge, in particular to fill gaps or deal with local power inequities.	Do not impose external or 'scientific' ways of understanding and solving problems; do not undermine customary approaches and values that provide effective contributions to the ICCA.
Support networking among ICCAs for mutually beneficial learning and empowerment.	Do not flood attention on individual ICCAs as if they were unique phenomena.
Support respectful alliances among indigenous peoples, local communities, human right advocates, and development and conservation practitioners.	Do not pit local, culture-based rights and values against human rights, human development, or conservation aspirations with general appeal.
Promote values of community integrity and solidarity and environmental awareness and care.	Do not incite private interests, power, and violence as values or conform to them as dominant discourse.
Support conflict management and peace and reconciliation efforts that respect local communities and their ties to nature.	Do not exacerbate conflicts or put communities in the frontline of conflicts.

Views of Indigenous and non-indigenous community representatives on Helpful and Unhelpful Support to their Initiatives¹⁰

Description of the territories and success factors identified

The territories and areas governed by the indigenous peoples and communities consulted were relatively well conserved from an ecological, cultural and social perspective. They were more biodiverse than surrounding areas, with higher numbers of flagship species such as large mammals. They also played an important role in the conservation of traditional knowledge and cultural expressions, and in sustaining the livelihoods of the respective peoples and

¹⁰ Based on interviews with Taghi Farvar, World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples, from Iran; Jorge Andreve, from Kuna Yala, Panama; Hubertus Samangun, ICTI-Tanimbar, Indonesia; and Artiso Mandawa, from Aldawar, Palawan, Philippines, and the feedback received during the seminar on the do's and don'ts of supporting community initiatives to conserve and restore forests.

communities. In particular, the territories conserved by nomadic indigenous peoples were identified as providing an indispensable source of livelihood and food sovereignty for local communities, who have adapted their management practices to their natural surroundings over the centuries.

The factors identified as contributing to the success of these conservation efforts were remarkably similar. Many people mentioned autonomy and the fact that indigenous peoples and traditional communities were able to manage their territories and areas according to their own traditional vision, knowledge and practices as being fundamental to the success of these initiatives.

Relative isolation was also seen as a positive factor in this respect. Similarly, the revival of traditional governance structures in a country such as Iran was also seen as an important factor. In this case revived structures were subsequently empowered to negotiate successfully with the government over the right of mobile peoples to manage their own migratory routes and territories. One example that was highlighted were the Indigenous territories (Comarcas) in Panama, where the tribes still fostered a strong governance structure that had been able to prohibit damaging industries to enter the land.

Another factor that was highlighted was the fact that access to lands was (in most cases) communal rather than private, and that there were restrictions on commercial transfers of land. Individual members of tribes were strictly obliged to follow a communal management plan elaborated by community elders. There also is a strong respect for sacred sites in Indigenous and traditional value systems, in fact, many of their spiritual values are linked to certain natural sites or features. This approach is very distinct from the economic approach that is often promoted through the concept of "environmental services"¹¹.

Helpful forms of support from external actors

As far as helpful support from external actors was concerned, most interviewees mentioned the recognition of their territory as an autonomous region to be administered by the indigenous people or local community as a particularly helpful form of support. Workshop participants welcomed legal and political support from governments for their traditional land rights and governance systems, and support for land reform, recognition of land tenure, agro-ecological strategies that contribute to food sovereignty, and ecologically and culturally appropriate forest restoration and agroforestry projects. There also is a need for capacity building in the field of forest fire management.

Other acknowledged forms of support included campaign support from national and international NGOs including political and technical support for campaigns to ensure the recognition of territorial rights and/or to halt threats such as logging and mining. International networking also plays an important role. Political, legal and financial support to campaigns to halt the destruction of indigenous territories and community lands by outside actors was considered to be especially important. Such destruction is often illegal, but litigation is expensive. In practice this means that access to justice for indigenous peoples and local communities is often hampered by lack of financial resources. So they welcomed support for legal and advocacy campaigns, including through solidarity networks between different movements like Indigenous Peoples' movements, peasant movements and women's movements. This also helps people to overcome their relative isolation and stand up to international corporations that are often able to move much faster than they are. There also is a need for capacity building to ensure traditional leaders are able to cope with outside pressures and resist "carbon cowboys" and other profiteers offering small sums of money in exchange for community rights.

Other welcome support includes technical support including, for example, for the documentation of customary laws in a way that is understandable for outside actors, and the sharing of skills in the elaboration of management plans.

¹¹ UNEP 2009. The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for national and international policy makers. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, Kenya

Unhelpful forms of support and intervention by external actors

External forms of support and other factors that can undermine or even destroy a successful initiative include outside pressures that threaten the autonomy or even the survival of the area, such as pressure from logging and mining corporations, tree plantation companies, large-scale tourism operations, climate change, and plant diseases. During the workshop it was pointed out that the neo-liberal economic model and industrialization had caused significant ecological damage and concentration of lands in the hands of corporations and that many Governments still support this take-over of community land, especially in Africa. They present "reforestation projects" with exotic tree species as a form of development, but these plantations destroy local cultures and biodiversity, and undermine food sovereignty. Workshop participants strongly denounced false solutions to climate change, including contradictory policies that promote REDD+ hand-in-hand with bioenergy policies that trigger widespread forest loss and degradation.



Plantations in Colombia. Photo: Censat Agua Viva

Lack of respect for the autonomy and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities, and for their right to free prior and informed consent, was also seen as a significant factor leading to the failure of local initiatives. During the workshop, Indigenous participants pointed out that many development policies were based on the prejudice that Indigenous communities were poor, and that they needed outside help to "develop". Most development approaches are very top-down. Especially imposing religious ideas was seen as very destructive as it undermined traditional belief systems that lie at the heart of community governance and the strong sense of responsibility to care for the natural environment (Mother earth) that underlies many traditional religions. There should be a strengthening of Indigenous spirituality instead. It was even mentioned that the lack of international support for initiatives in Iran had been something of a blessing, because it had stimulated groups to develop their own solutions. International support often comes with fixed ideas on governance structures including cooperatives and other western institutions, which are alien to some cultures, and tend to be rejected by indigenous leaders.

Workshop participants cautioned about projects that ignored the rights and needs of women and pointed out that in initiatives like REDD+, gender was often respected in theory only. Food sovereignty should be a central element of any initiative that aims to support women, as the availability of healthy and sufficient food is a pre-condition for the wellbeing of their families. It is essential to ensure respect for women's land tenure rights, but many women are confronted by land grabbing these days as bioenergy expansion and forest carbon offset projects have increased the value of land. People also cautioned about top-down projects that are based on fixed perspectives of gender and ignore the rights and needs women have under traditional customary rights.

People mentioned a lack of real support and economic incentives, including a lack of support for infrastructure and for the conservation of traditional knowledge and management practices. Too often, alternative livelihood opportunities promoted by REDD+ and other conservation projects are economically non-viable or otherwise inappropriate or infeasible. However, it was also mentioned that giving money to communities often creates tensions and conflicts between communities and amongst community members. Concepts like the "green economy" impose economic value systems that promote profit-making and undermine traditional community values. It creates a mentality in which community members are only willing to continue to apply their traditional conservation practices if they are paid to do so. Moreover, money seldom comes without strings: it often goes hand in hand with a large number of externally imposed restrictions that can undermine the livelihoods of communities and indigenous peoples.

It was also highlighted that the introduction of private property forms a significant threat to community conservation initiatives, as it enables individuals to sell or lease their land for private profit, to logging and mining corporations for example. Privatisation also undermines the traditional cultures of indigenous peoples, by introducing them to monetary values and urban consumption and production patterns. This eventually triggers migration to urban centres, especially by young people. Some of the lands left behind are bought up by businessmen and corporations that convert them into agro-industrial monocultures including tree plantations. Furthermore, due to the resulting lack of communal land, some management practices have subsequently become much more difficult to implement.

Recommendations

People's main recommendations focused on the need to respect the autonomy of indigenous peoples and local communities with respect to their territories and areas, and their own agenda and knowledge (which forms an important basis for forest conservation initiatives). This is particularly true for climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

It is also important that the specific knowledge of indigenous women is not overlooked in such strategies. As Jennifer Koinante, GFC African Indigenous Focal Point and Vice-chair to the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee notes:

"Indigenous people have no platform through which their cumulative indigenous knowledge and experience with the environment and capability in climate change prediction may be tapped, documented, shared and used to their benefit including other stakeholders. Our cumulative knowledge is disparaged and ignored and never considered necessary in climate change prediction and adaptation policy making. There is an expedient need to tap and document Traditional Ecological Knowledge held by indigenous women. This can be quite essential in climate change prediction and adaptation policy making."

"By design, institutions of governance and those charged with the task of Climate change adaptation making policy disregard Traditional Ecological Knowledge (T.E.K) as outmoded yet it is us who will suffer the inadequacies of the final print. For purposes of alleviating poverty and seeking social justice and equity, it is imperative for African Governments and Policy Makers to establish a frame work for the effective consultation of African Indigenous women in the development of an adequate climate change adaptation policy."

It was emphasized that support for indigenous and community initiatives should be flexible and take into account the dynamic nature of these initiatives. It should also take into account the fact that many indigenous and community management systems are undergoing considerable change at the moment due to outside pressures and migration to urban centres. They need their own governance systems, which should be properly recognised and supported, so that they can stand up to external pressure from logging, mining and plantation companies. The importance of investing in social capital was also highlighted, especially support that enables communities and peoples to acquire the skills they need to deal with the pressures that arise as they engage with monetary economies.



Indigenous Women in Indonesia. Photo: AMAN

Representatives of Indigenous Peoples Organizations, peasant movements, women's groups, trade unions and other community representatives who testified prior to and at the seminar recommended the following forms of external support to ICCAs and other community-driven initiatives to conserve and restore forests:

- The recognition of Indigenous territorial rights, autonomy, traditional knowledge and governance systems;
- Enabling Indigenous peoples and local communities to share knowledge, strengthen their institutions and governance systems, and build alliances with like-minded movements;
- Governmental policies to support land reform, sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty and sustainable alternative livelihood options, provided these policies respect and build upon the rights, traditional knowledge, governance systems and livelihood strategies of Indigenous Peoples and small farmers; and
- Legal, political and financial support for campaigns against destructive policies and projects, including logging, mining, large tree plantations and land grabbing;

The following kinds of external support were definitely NOT seen as helpful:

- REDD+ and other projects that convince Indigenous peoples and local communities to sign false or otherwise unfair PES agreements and that create tensions and even conflicts within and between communities and that undermine their livelihoods;
- REDD+ projects and policies funded through offsets from mining, logging or agro-industrial companies, as it is very unlikely such companies will provide badly needed support for legal and advocacy campaigns against their industries;
- REDD+ and other support for monoculture tree plantations, which cause serious negative impacts on local communities and Indigenous Peoples, and forests;
- Top-down forms of support that do not respect and undermine the rights, spiritual value systems, and governance systems of Indigenous Peoples and communities. International support often comes with fixed ideas about governance structures that are inappropriate for indigenous Peoples and local communities;
- Projects and policies that ignore women's rights and needs, and gender initiatives that do not take into account the traditional rights and status of women;
- Projects that impose economically unviable or otherwise senseless alternative livelihoods on Indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Projects that trigger the privatization of land and the commodification of nature, also because they undermine traditional communal values and governance systems.