

# Indigenous peoples and biodiversity conservation: the potential for synergies

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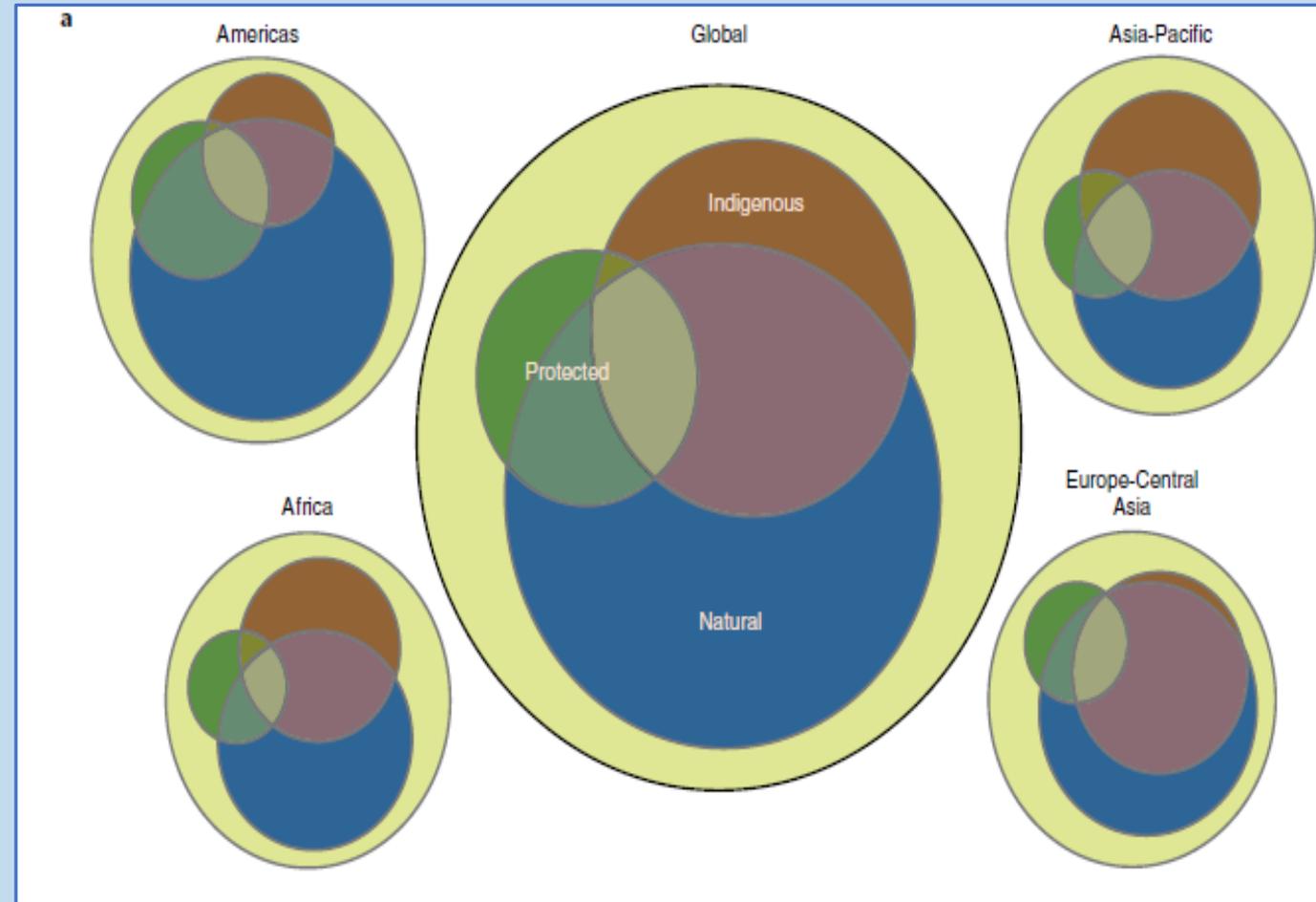
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# Indigenous peoples and biodiversity conservation: the potential for synergies

About 40% of all terrestrial protected areas and about 40% of other ecologically intact landscapes are under customary ownership and management of indigenous peoples.

Three main contexts:

1. Protected areas and indigenous peoples
2. Biodiversity management in indigenous territories
3. Biodiversity and indigenous rights in mainstream development



Source: Garnett et al 2018. A spatial overview of the global importance of Indigenous lands for conservation. Nature Sustainability <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-018-0100-6>.

# 1. Protected areas and indigenous peoples

Protected area: “A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values”.

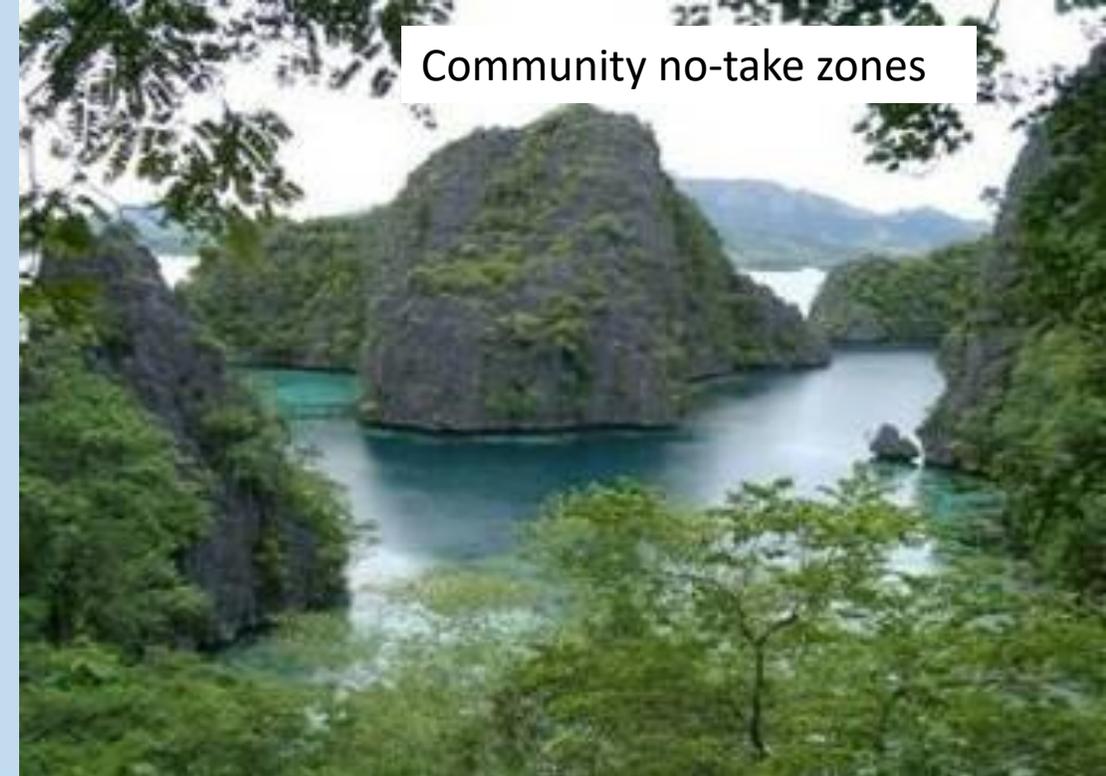
## IUCN Protected areas governance types

A. Governed by the State

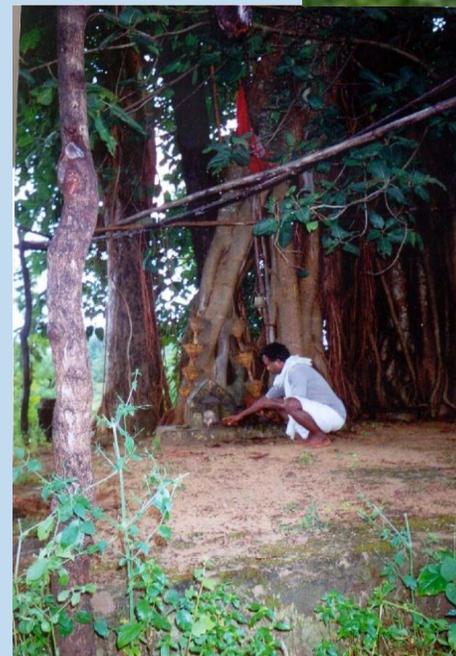
B. Shared governance

C. Private governance

D. Governed by Indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs)



Sacred natural sites



# EMBEDDING HUMAN RIGHTS IN NATURE CONSERVATION: FROM INTENT TO ACTION

Report of the Independent Panel of Experts of the Independent Review of allegations raised in the media regarding human rights violations in the context of WWF's conservation work

17 November 2020

## Key issues arising:

Exclusionary state-run protected areas remain dominant

Human rights abuses are widespread

The lack of adequate social safeguards is systemic in protected areas conservation. It is not specific to WWF or to the NGO sector

Funders have a key role to play in bringing about change



# Global targets for protected areas expansion

## **Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 :**

At least 17% of inland areas and 10% of coastal / marine areas conserved through effectively / equitably managed and ecologically representative / well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures.

## **Proposed post-2020 Target:**

30% of the planet protected / conserved by protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures by 2030

No text on equity or social safeguards

## Other effective conservation measures (OECMs):

“A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values”.

- Protected areas are defined by the primary objective (conservation)
- OECMs are defined by the outcomes

Are OECMs a potential mechanism for recognition of the biodiversity value of indigenous territories?



# Some examples of indigenous conservation:

## 1. Conservation of species

Source: Forest Peoples Programme: Local Biodiversity Outlooks  
<https://localbiodiversityoutlooks.net/>

*Tamang culture has a “Choho” traditional institution of Tamang, to help take care of the forest, red panda habitat, historical areas and resources*

Tamang community member (source: Forest Peoples Programme: Local Biodiversity Outlooks)

### Conservation measures:

- If anyone hunts a panda or tries to disobey a collective decision, he or she will be punished.
- Protection / restoration of water sources and ponds (for bamboo).
- Creation of fire breaks and rotational firewatches



## 2. Conservation of ecosystems

### The Wapichan, Guyana

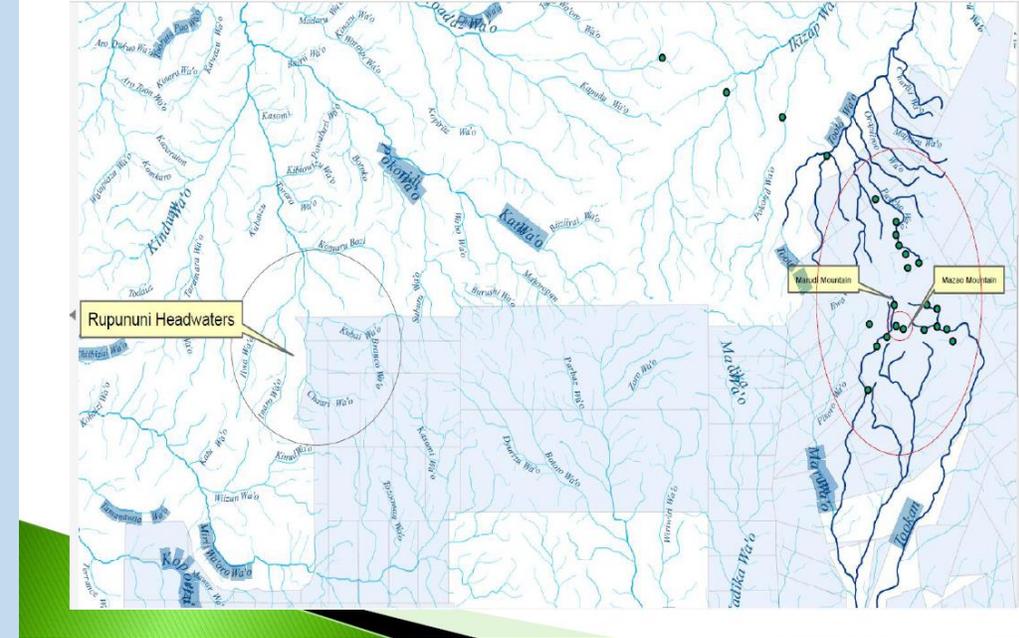
- Sustainable land-use plan across 17 communities and 2.8m ha in conservation priority area
- Common principles, goals, and customary laws on responsible use
- Ongoing environmental monitoring, including of mining encroachment
- Hundreds of wildlife sites for community protection

### Outcomes:

- Reduced illegal activities and environmental degradation
- Talks with government over land claims but land as yet untitled

(source: Forest Peoples Programme: Local Biodiversity Outlooks)

### Monitoring mining encroachment, Oct 2015



### 3. Sustainable natural resource management

Source: Forest Peoples Programme: Local Biodiversity Outlooks  
<https://localbiodiversityoutlooks.net/>

#### Tagal: traditional fisheries management in Sabah

Shared management responsibilities for rivers and other natural resources based on *adat*.

Tagal: 'prohibition'

For example:

- No-fishing areas and time periods
- A ban on poisoning and harmful fishing equipment
- Restrictions on entry
- Pre-defined penalties for breaking the rules

Scaling up: About 400 tagal fisheries in collaboration with Sabah Fisheries Department.

Globally, small-scale marine and inland fisheries contribute nearly 50 percent of the total fish catch (FAO, 2014).



# Potential synergies: some ways forward

## Protected areas and indigenous peoples

- Effective safeguarding
- Move from overwhelming emphasis on state protected areas to indigenous and community conserved areas / OECMs
- New targets on equity and indigenous governance

## Indigenous territories and biodiversity

- Secure land tenure and support for territorial defence
- Greater support for indigenous conservation and sustainable land use
- Better understanding of the enabling conditions for indigenous conservation



<sup>1</sup> OECD (2019) *Biodiversity: Finance and the economic business case for action*. <https://www.oecd.org/environment/resources/biodiversity/G7-report-Biodiversity-Finance-and-the-Economic-and-Business-Case-for-Action.pdf>. Cited in LBO2. Aichi Biodiversity Target 3 focuses on reform of incentives. <sup>2</sup>Rights and Resources Initiative (2015) *Who owns the world's land? A global baseline of formally recognized indigenous and community land rights*. [https://rightsandresources.org/wp-content/uploads/GlobalBaseline\\_web.pdf](https://rightsandresources.org/wp-content/uploads/GlobalBaseline_web.pdf).