



The Global Support Initiative to Indigenous Peoples and Community-Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCA-GSI)

Title of Workshop:

Regional ICCA Knowledge Sharing & Capacity-
building Workshop for Central and West Asia

Level: Regional

Place: Ysyk-Köl Lake, Kyrgyzstan

Date: 11-14 June 2017



Background:

The Global Support Initiative to Indigenous Peoples and Community-Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCA-GSI) was formed to foster the improved recognition, support and overall effectiveness of ICCAs through enhanced capacities in at least 26 pilot countries. In June 2017, ICCA-GSI organized a regional workshop in Kyrgyzstan to enhance the capacities of multi-level actors from the Central and West Asia regions in promoting and strengthening ICCA recognition and support in the region. ICCA-GSI participating countries in the region include Georgia, Iran, Jordan and Kyrgyzstan. Similar workshops were held for other regions in 2015 and 2016: South-East Asia region in Lombok, Indonesia and South America region in Cayambe, Ecuador (both in 2015); Mesoamerica region in Petén, Guatemala and East and Southern Africa regions in Kongola, Namibia (both in 2016).

Workshop Participation:

The 4-day workshop was co-organized by ICCA-GSI partners, the GEF Small Grant Programme (SGP) and the ICCA Consortium, along with two NGOs, CENESTA (Iran) and the Green Line Eco (Kyrgyzstan). Representatives from other ICCA-GSI partners, the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Global Protected Areas Programme (IUCN GPAP) and United Nations Environment Programme's World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP WCMC), joined civil society organizations (CSOs) and national teams from SGP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) from the aforementioned ICCA-GSI participating countries as well as SGP teams and CSOs from Armenia, Tajikistan and Turkey.

Workshop Activities and Discussion Points: The sessions opened with identifying the participants' expectations from the workshop which guided the facilitation of the workshop agenda. These included: (i.) to develop greater understanding and knowledge of ICCAs as a concept; (ii.) to develop Awareness & Empowerment of ICCAs; (iii.) to understand ICCAs in context: Legislation, Policy & Advocacy Mechanisms; and (iv.) to acquire networking & mutual support.



The main activities focused on raising the awareness and build the capacities of the national teams in (i.) understanding of ICCAs situation in participating countries; (ii.) developing practical tools for ICCAs, including country work plans; (iii.) understanding the roles of ICCA-GSI key partners; (iv.) local legislation and policy pertaining to ICCAs; and (iii.) networking, advocacy, empowerment and increased awareness for ICCAs.

I. Development of country action plans on ICCAs

Each country team was asked to make a presentation about current policy, practice, conditions and prospects of the ICCAs in their respective countries. Subsequently, the country teams produced 'speaking maps' that graphically displayed the prospective proxy locations of different ICCA types in respective regions. Presentations were followed by a Q & A session and the transpiring discussions helped the country teams to further develop their action plans. The information by country is as follows:

A. Kyrgyzstan

a.) Identified ICCAs and its local terms: sacred sites, seasonal pastures, and communal gardens.

b.) Threats: Path dependency: pasture managers have been trained in the USSR and run things in accordance with their training. The soviet history and correlating shock transition to market economy has negatively impacted ICCAs including interruption to knowledge transfer, especially for pasture lands; and competing interests due to conflicting strategies on land use/ conservation/ protection.

c.) Opportunities and status of formal recognition:

- Sacred sites: formal recognition not necessary, mitigating the impact of excessive pilgrimage/ use, improving sanitation facilities and access to clean water, and increasing the 'carrying capacity or resilience to frequent use. Formal recognition may not be necessary.

- Seasonal Pastures: Well organized, but need mapping of traditional pastures according to traditional knowledge and practices, and involvement of elders and younger members of community. Develop app which can show in real time the condition of pasture.



- Communal gardens: Not sure whether recognition is necessary or will be beneficial, conduct inventory of gene pool, creating network of communal gardens, promote seed exchange and marketing of local produce, and land tenure issues depending on its locations.

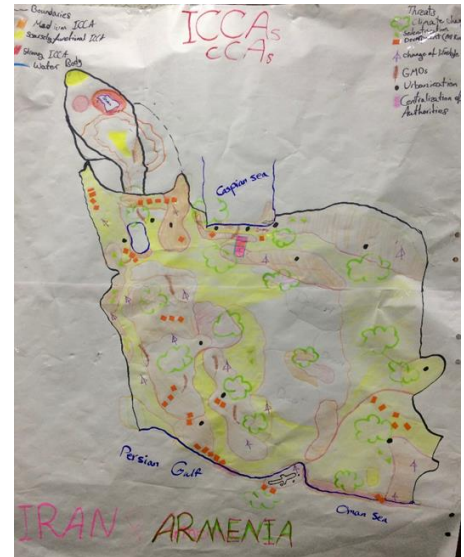
d.) Initiatives:

- Capacity building of local communities in preventing conflict related to sacred sites
- Capacity building of felt pastoralists in synthesizing traditional knowledge and new technologies
- Creating an inventory of local agro-biodiversity and creating storage and exchange facilities- creating potential market outlets.

B. Iran and Armenia

a.) Identified ICCAs, its local terms and status:

- **Iran:** Qoruck (Turkish), Qoroq (other nomads), Ab-bandan, Damgah (duma), Moshta, Hootak, Galazani, Orf (Saman or other forms), Qanats with its watershed area, and other community-based territorial governance types
- **Status:** ICCAs cover about 75% of the country's total area; 59% of nomadic territories due to declaration of Organization for Nomadic Pastoralists of Iran (ONPI). Types include: forests; transhumance migratory routes; coastal marine area; transboundary conservation areas between Pakistan, Iraq, Armenia, and Azerbaijan; desert, and agricultural lands across country (smaller than nomadic pastoralist areas)
- **Armenia:** Aroteghi; Mairy
- **Status:** Cover about 50% of the country's total area. Traditional types include: traditional agriculture ICCAs, nomads, wetland ICCAs. New types include: eco-villages.



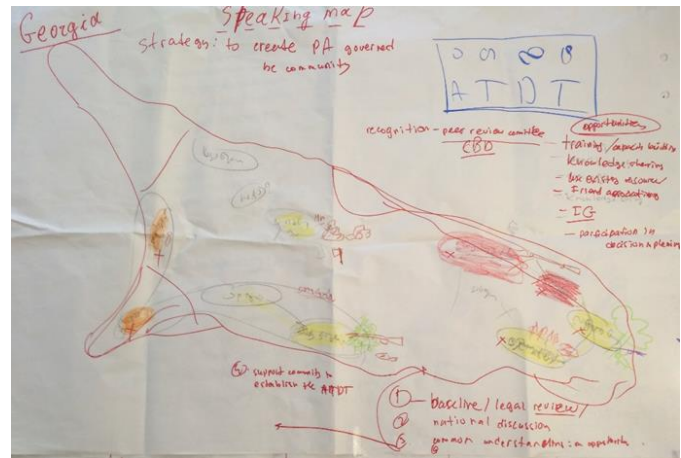
b.) Threats to both countries include urbanization; unsustainable development (road, mining, dam); over harvesting (over fishing, over grazing, unsustainable agriculture); unsustainable use of fresh water (dams, water transfer projects, water treatment plants/freshwater plants); unsustainable tourism; lack of recognition of ICCAs by government, E-NGOs including no representation in decision-making and planning process, lack of access to information, lack of knowledge-sharing or networking, lack of inter-sectoral collaboration and stakeholder discussions, lack of strategic planning, and participatory approach not implemented; disappearing traditional knowledge and elders dying/no documentation; forced and/or induced sedentism of nomads; climate change and its impacts; multi-national corporations/industries as serious threat to agriculture ICCAs and their rights to seed (GMOs); lack of recognition for customary laws and rights; lifestyle changes; coastal development (ports, land reclamation, etc.); land use change; weakened self-recognition/identification by IPs/LCs, cooperatives.

c.) Opportunities and status of formal recognition: Network of Pas, bio-cultural diversity; good funding sources (GEF SGP, ICCA-GSI, etc.); community-based development (best practices) and opportunity for upscaling; CBT (community-based tourism); Indigenous and traditional knowledge; support from various institutions; Islamic council and parliament representatives (in this government); active women participation in development process; Eco-village network; transboundary cooperation; and ICCA registry.

d.) Initiatives: Iran: Identification and documentation of ICCAs/CCAs in Iran with strong engagement and ownership of local groups; Appropriate recognition and re-strengthening the governance system of ICCAs /CCAs for the conservation of nature (preservation, sustainable use, restoration); Direct involvement of ICCA/CCA representatives in decision making (planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) at local, provincial, national and regional levels; Strengthen/establish knowledge networks for sharing experiences and best practices; Facilitate access to information for ICCAs/CCAs (in national or local language); Ensure development respects customary rights and laws related to ICCAs/CCAs, including unharmed and engaged IPs/LCs; prevention of pollution in the environment; and conservation of nature; Co-management of existing protected areas in Iran with IPs/LCs to move towards community based management; Aiming at taking back the "Nationalization" Decree (strong demand of nomadic components of the Iranian group and their civil society supporters including Cenesta)

C. Georgia

- a.) Identified ICCA and its local terms: Adgilobrivi Temebis mier Daculi Teritoriebi (ATDT) - fishing communities and nomadic pastoralists
- b.) Threats: Poaching- especially in Tusheti; illegal logging & burning practices; mining by local private companies and local community members.
- c.) Opportunities: Training/capacity building; re-empowering of communities; knowledge sharing; use existing resources e.g. friends' associations, implementing grant and donors; potential of formal recognition through peer review process

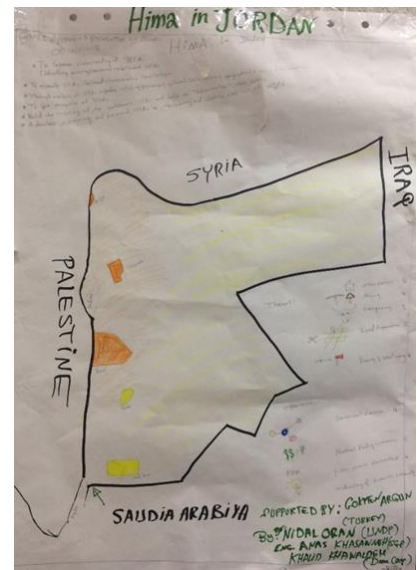


e.) Initiatives

- Baseline assessment across whole country and identify gaps regarding ICCA's
- Common understanding on opportunities
- Support communities to establish network
- Work actively towards this through peer review process.

D. Jordan

- a.) Identified ICCA and its local terms: Swymeh - semi-arid, canal from Jordan river- used to irrigate agriculture; Zigleb- forest; and Hima
- b.) Status: All fall potential or existing ICCAs identified at this stage fall within or close to PAs. Governance of PAs in Jordan by government, Therefore, ICCA communities are within a system governed by government.
- c.) Threats: Urbanization; mining; overgrazing; land fragmentation; hunting and logging
- d.) Opportunities: Decentralization; national funding for implementation; public/ private partnership; and availability of expertise & research capacities
- e.) Initiatives: Improve understanding of ICCAs in Jordan (and identifying existing/ potential emblematic ICCAs)
 - Research ICCA livelihood/ conservation interactions in the country
 - Thorough analysis of ICCAs in Jordan, including historical, cultural, socio-economic, geographical & ecological context.
 - Promote recognition of ICCAs where appropriate
 - Capacity building of emblematic ICCAs, and help to 'institutionalize' their work
 - Create database of existing and potential ICCAs in Jordan, and submit to WDPA



II. Presentations on the Assessment of ICCAs in the region – by ICCA Consortium

- a. Existing ICCA concepts and practices
- b. Threats
- c. Opportunities

III. Presentations on ICCA-GSI

- a. Goals, procedures and the timeline - by GEF SGP
- b. World database of Protected Areas and the ICCA Registry - by IUCN

IV. Field trip to local models of potential ICCAs in the Ysyk-Köl region

- a. Participatory engagement in identifying which type of ICCA were the sites being visited

- Defined ICCA: ICCAs that improve recognition, foster respect and address emerging issues (e.g. adaptation to climate change)
- Disrupted ICCA: ICCAs that need the revival of Traditional Knowledge (TK), healing processes, community defense mechanisms and support next generations/youth.
- Desired ICCA: ICCAs that need community organization/mobilization, mapping of boundaries, development and utilization of new laws

b. Sites visits

The participants were divided into two (2) groups and each group visited 2 sites.



Group 1 site visits included:

- A high-altitude summer pasture in Jyrgalan Valley of Ysyk-Köl region where a small community runs an eco-tourism business and horse-milk based health treatment programs.
- A local community in Lipenka village that runs a social enterprise on restoration of endemic fish species of the Ysyk-Köl Lake such as Marinka (*Schizothorax*) and Osman (*Diptychus*). This is a project supported by the Community Development and Knowledge Management for Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) that was delivered through SGP.

Group 2 site visits included:

- Manjly-Ata sacred site comprising nine springs that are revered by local people. It is located near Kadji-Sai Village on the southern shore of Ysyk-Köl Lake. Pilgrims visit this sacred site seeking blessing, good fortune, cure from various health problems, the major of which is infertility. There is a sacred site guardian who voluntarily takes care of a sacred site and who is appointed by the local community. The pilgrims come from all over the country to visit Manjly-Ata, it is considered to be the most well-known sacred site in the southern Ysyk-Köl area.
- This group also visited a local community in Kara-Bulun Bay of Ysyk-Köl region, which is working to conserve endemic species of fruit and berries and to restore 100 hectares of degraded land via introducing drip irrigation and sustainable agriculture practices among local farmers. This is also a project that was supported by COMDEKS.

c. Conclusions from post-visit discussions:

- The **core of any ICCA is a community** and that it is a community (and not the outsiders) who identify whether a particular place is an ICCA or not.
- The visited ICCAs do not seem to meet all the ICCA criteria, but rather can be seen as 'Disturbed ICCAs' (that had all three characteristics in the past, but do not today due to some disturbances)

or as ‘Desired ICCAs’ (that never had all three characteristics but have the *potential* of developing the three characteristics through new, or newly effective, community engagement).

Outcomes:

As a result of this workshop, there is improved and shared understanding among the participants on the various types of ICCA and its potential for biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods. There is also better understanding of the ICCA-GSI goals, timelines, procedures and the type of support that are provided by the partner organizations such as SGP, ICCA Consortium, IUCN and UNEP WCMC. Moreover, country action plans were developed for each pilot country in the region (Georgia, Iran, Jordan and Kyrgyzstan) that captures country-specific goals and objectives, main activities, target regions and the responsible parties/stakeholders.

The [ICCA-GSI](#) is a multi-partnership initiative that is delivered by the UNDP-implemented Small Grants Programme ([SGP](#)) and funded by the Government of Germany, through its Federal Ministry for the Environment, nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety ([BMUB](#)). Key partners include the United Nations Environment Programme’s World Conservation Monitoring Centre ([UNEP WCMC](#)), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature’s Global Programme on Protected Areas ([IUCN GPAP](#)), the [ICCA Consortium](#) and the Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity ([CBD](#)).

