



ASEAN + Timor Leste Sub-Regional Dialogue on National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

August 14-17, Dusit Thani, Makati City, Philippines

Statement by the ICCA Consortium Southeast Asia

On the occasion of the Sub-Regional Dialogue on NBSAPs, the ICCA Consortium in Southeast Asia contributes this statement to affirm the critical importance of recognizing and appropriately integrating indigenous and local community conserved territories and areas (ICCAs), representing a rich bio-cultural heritage, and the governance and knowledge systems within them, in NBSAPs.

ICCAs, also referred to as territories of life, are areas of different ecosystems conserved by IPLCs. They are the heart of indigenous peoples and local community territories and lands that are governed with conservation outcomes. When custodians of land and water have an intrinsic link with their environment, their stewardship ensures the sustainability of resources. We are reminded that an important assertion and basis of the current KM - GBF is that Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial have played a strong custodianship of biodiversity and who currently protect up to 80% of the world's biodiversity. IPLCs have been doing conservation and sustainable use for as long as one can remember, across generations.

ICCAs are as diverse as the region's cultural, ecological and biophysical landscape. They are found in terrestrial and marine ecosystems - from the mountain ridges to the dense forests, lowland plains, coastal areas and coral reefs - providing habitats to vast numbers of flora and fauna, and around which indigenous and local communities who are its de facto stewards harbor significant traditional knowledge and wisdom about their uses, their preservation, and their protection.

ICCAs could be as small as less than a hectare of forest patch used as a burial ground for revered tribal leaders in the island of Mindoro in the Philippines as large as the 500,000 hectares of the Prey Lang forest in Cambodia. They may overlap formally with

designated protected areas and key biodiversity areas but importantly these are self-determined IPLC conserved areas.

Status and extent of ICCAs in Southeast Asia:

- Philippines' IPLCs through the support of their IPOs and partner CSOs such as the Philippine ICCA Consortium/Bukluran, and the Philippine Association for Intercultural Development (PAFID), have mapped at least 20 ICCAs but there are at least another 197 potential ICCAs that ICCA Consortium members have documented and preliminarily mapped with an estimate of over a million hectares.
- In Myanmar, at least 20 ICCAs - with one, the Salween Peace Park already recognized internationally as an emblematic ICCA and an example of a strong sustainable good practice and defense of indigenous territory, and biocultural diversity.
- In Malaysia, 19 ICCAs have already been documented including locally managed marine areas/seascapes.
- The Working Group of ICCAs in Indonesia have mapped 120 ICCAs with a total area of 467, 662 hectares and with up to 4.2 million hectares potential ICCAs that would very well be aligned with the global target of reducing threats to biodiversity compatible with the respect and recognition of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.

ICCAs are very diverse and may be called by different names: Tana Ulen (Indonesia), Alas Mertajati (Indonesia), Leweung Tutupan and Leweung Titipan (Indonesia), Faganon Fuhayo (Philippines), Idsesenggilaha (Sacred Grounds, Philippines) , Kaw (Myanmar), Pastulan (Philippines), Lapat/Inlapat (Philippines), Muyong/Amuyong (Philippines), Tagal (Malaysia).

Following UNDRIP being the prime reference for national policies and strategies for engagement with Indigenous Peoples, and given the biological and cultural importance of ICCAs, key decisions in global processes have recognized and included ICCAs in global conservation targets and guidelines - from the Aichi Targets particularly Targets 11 (protected areas increased and improved), 14 (Ecosystems and essential services safeguarded), 18 (Traditional knowledge respected),C BD COP 13, Cancun, 2016 Voluntary guidance for best practice and protection and recognition of ICCAs, Article 8(j) on traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, and 10(c) on use of biodiversity with focus on customary sustainable use and to implement the Programme of Work on Protected Areas - that mandates countries to involve IPs and recognize their own conservation areas, and now with the KM-GBF, Targets 1, ,5, 9, 11, 21, 22,23 - which

reiterate respect and recognition of indigenous peoples traditional knowledge and rights over their traditional territories.

Therefore on this occasion to dialogue here in our region we would like to affirm that just like ICCAs are at the heart of the diversity and richness and sustainability of protected and conserved indigenous peoples territories of life, the self-determined IPLCs because of this, could also stand at the heart of the realization of the KM-GBF; ie. indigenous peoples and local communities and vitally including the women and youth members of these communities;

IPLCs with the women and youth, in their ICCAs are a vital part of the expertise and groundedness needed to realize these global, regional and national targets to keep our precious biodiversity on earth.

The goals of reducing threats to biodiversity loss, to sustainable use and benefit sharing, and utilizing innovative and inclusive tools and solutions for mainstreaming biodiversity, will be realized only if the IPLCs and their ICCAs are in all aspects of operationalizing the KM GBF, not only in consultations and dialogue but in the actual governance and decision-making, implementation and monitoring of the local- national, regional and global biodiversity strategies and plans. They need to be included in the governance committees, the technical expert groups, the working groups, equipped with adequate resources, access to adequate biodiversity finance, and access to the capacity building and knowledge management initiatives surrounding the implementation of the GBF.

The Global ICCA Movement

In 2009, following the inclusion/recognition on ICCA in the Aichi global biodiversity targets, CSOs and IPLC started a movement to follow up and promote this recognition. Hence the birth of the ICCA Consortium. It is a global non-profit association dedicated to supporting indigenous peoples and local communities in promoting the recognition of their ICCA. It is a membership-based movement found in all continents including Southeast Asia that has supported numerous indigenous and local communities in their self-strengthening process to raise awareness and to seek recognition and protection of ICCAs consistent with UNDRIP and the recognition of international bodies and processes of the biological and cultural significance of ICCAs.

Globally we stand as 217 organizational members - who are indigenous peoples organizations and federations (IPOs), and community based organizations and federations (CBOs) and their support organizations (NGOs) and 474 individual honorary members.

In Southeast Asia, we have 21 organizational members and 50 individual honorary members, a Regional Council, and a seat in the ICCA Global Council. The Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP), a member of the ICCA Consortium, supports the Regional Council and ICCA Consortium Southeast Asia members as its regional coordinator and hub. Each country in the region has its own network of members and partners, some of whom are already serving as partners and contributors to the NBSAP process, but a number of us still remain to be involved and meaningfully engaged.

See [Territories of Life in Southeast Asia](#)

