

# Briefing Note on ICCAs, climate change and international climate change–related policies and mechanisms

The logo for The ICCA Consortium, featuring the text "The ICCA Consortium" in a bold, sans-serif font, with "The ICCA" on the top line and "Consortium" on the bottom line, both in a dark red color, set against a solid orange rectangular background.

## Introduction

This briefing note on Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCAs), climate change and international climate related-policies and mechanisms has been prepared for the Members and partners of the ICCA Consortium ([www.iccacosnortium.org](http://www.iccacosnortium.org)). It consists of two separate elements, which have been split up as they target two distinct audiences:

1. The first part of the briefing paper is an internal document that targets the members of the ICCA Consortium. It consists of a concise overview of the relationship between ICCAs and climate change and the most important international climate related-policies and mechanisms that are relevant for ICCAs, including an overview of existing safeguard policies. It includes a number of brief case studies and an overview of opportunities, concerns, and recommendations to the membership of the ICCA consortium regarding international climate change policies and mechanisms. This first part also includes a specific proposal for a joint initiative that builds on the initial research on the do's and don'ts of supporting forest conservation and restoration initiatives by local communities and Indigenous Peoples: the Community Conservation Resilience Assessment. This initiative aims to undertake a global analysis of the resilience of ICCAs and other initiatives by Indigenous Peoples and local communities to conserve and restore forests and other ecosystems and the kind of support that would be appropriate and effective to enhance the resilience of these initiatives, and to feed the results of this analysis into the various "Country Needs Assessment" processes that have begun within the framework of policies to Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation and enhance Forest Carbon Stocks (REDD+), climate change adaptation, and the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biodiversity.

2. The second part of this briefing note is an analytical report on the Do's and Don'ts of Supporting Forest Conservation and Restoration Initiatives by Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples. This report was prepared in consultation with members of the ICCA Consortium, the REDD and Communities Task Force of the Theme on Governance, Equity and Rights of the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy and the Global Forest Coalition for a wide audience of policy-makers and other actors involved in the development and implementation of climate change-related policies. It provides a set of concrete recommendations on how such actors could provide appropriate and effective support to ICCAs and other Indigenous and community initiatives to conserve and restore forests.

As these two elements of the briefing paper target very distinct audiences, it is proposed to produce and diffuse them separately.

# The relationship between ICCAs and climate change and the most important international climate related-policies and mechanisms that are relevant for ICCAs

## 1. The Threat of Climate Change for ICCAs

Without hesitation, climate change represents one of the most important threats to ICCAs. The climatic extremes that are the most concrete manifestation of climate change -- excessive and/or unseasonal storms, rains, droughts, snowfall, and/or unexpected high temperatures-- are bound to cause significant challenges to the ICCAs governed and managed by indigenous peoples and local communities. This is so nearly by definition as ICCAs embed unique bio-cultural approaches developed in response to specific climates and other natural conditions. In addition, indigenous peoples and local communities often live “at the forefront” of climate change, inhabiting coastal zones threatened by sea-level rise and intense storms, mountain areas where disappearing glaciers will create high level deserts, and arid lands at the mercy of severe droughts and flash floods.



*Indigenous Women in Guna Yala, Panama. Photo: Marcial Arias. The overwhelming majority of Guna People lives on low-lying islands that are severely threatened by sea-level rise.*

For instance, the impacts of climate change are felt very harshly by mobile indigenous peoples and all pastoralists inhabiting dryland ecosystems. While many of these peoples have developed biocultural approaches that provide them with a strong resilience against periods of droughts, the extremity of the droughts triggered by global warming

may undermine even some of the their most ancient and effective systems. The climatic models predict that especially Africa will suffer from longer and more severe periods of droughts in the decades to come.

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*"Maasai are aware that seasons are changing. The rainfall is less predictable. They are having to move their livestock more frequently than they used to. For example, the cold season used to last a month (July) and was also characterized by showers and sometimes moderate rainfall. Nowadays the cold weather lasts from June to end of August and is mostly just cold and dry in this part. From existing records, the area has experienced frequent droughts in the last three decades. Frequent droughts are exerting a major impact on people's livelihoods, increasing their vulnerability to food insecurity by reducing their coping abilities and often leading to massive losses in livestock numbers. Besides the loss of livestock, water sources have been reported to dry up sooner, while other hitherto reliable sources such as rivers and springs continue to dry up, leading to unprecedented scarcity in areas where the commodity had always been plenty or relatively available. Traditional knowledge about herbs, grasses, fruits, tubers and other knowledge about the environment is diminishing because many of those plants and wildlife are disappearing and so the youth cannot be taught effectively about them. "*  
Source: *Indigenous Peoples Biocultural Climate Change Assessment*. See: <http://ipcca.info/maasai/about/>



Maasai community. Photo: Dorobo Trust

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## 2. International Climate Change-related Policies and Mechanisms

By far the most important international Climate Change-related agreement is the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC stipulates amongst others that (Art. 4.1) *"All Parties, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development*

*priorities, objectives and circumstances, shall.... (c) Promote and cooperate in the development, application and diffusion, including transfer, of technologies, practices and processes that control, reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases...in all relevant sectors, including the energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management sectors; (d) Promote sustainable management, and promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of all greenhouse gases ... including biomass, forests and oceans as well as other terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems; (e) Cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of climate change; develop and elaborate appropriate and integrated plans for coastal zone management, water resources and agriculture, and for the protection and rehabilitation of areas, particularly in Africa, affected by drought and desertification, as well as floods;*

The UNFCCC obliges developed countries to provide new and additional financial resources to developing countries to meet the costs of these and other measures. Moreover, the 'common but differentiated responsibilities' principle implies that the developed countries who have historically contributed far more to the causes of climate change, take the lead in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.

The Kyoto protocol, which was adopted in 1997, includes so-called "Quantified Emission Limitation and Reduction Objectives (QELRO's) for the period until 2012. Until now, only a few countries and the European Union have indicated their willingness to take up similar emission reduction targets for the period after 2012, and they have insisted on a number of conditions, which include an expanded use of so-called "flexible mechanisms" and an expanded possibility to account for the emissions related to their so-called "Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry" (LULUCF) sector. "Flexible mechanisms" is a term used to describe various market-oriented approaches, including emissions trading (between countries that have taken up binding emission reductions) and carbon offset projects in developing countries that have not taken up binding emission reductions. A carbon offset project implies that polluters can buy a so-called carbon credit from a project that reduces a certain amount of greenhouse gas emissions as compared to a specific "baseline" or "reference level". The Clean Development Mechanism was set up under the Kyoto protocol to facilitate the trade in carbon offset projects. The latter can include afforestation and reforestation projects, but as it cannot be guaranteed that carbon is permanently stored by such initiatives they receive temporary carbon credits only. Moreover, the EU has excluded them from its internal trading system, which represents some 95% of all emissions trade, until 2020<sup>1</sup>. So until now they represent only a tiny percentage of the carbon offset projects that are formally part of the climate regime.

There has been a boom in voluntary forest carbon offset projects the past years. These projects are not recognized by the climate regime, so they are merely a form of green marketing by companies that want to pretend they are so-called 'carbon neutral'. Forest carbon offsets have been relatively popular in the voluntary carbon market: In 2010 they formed some 29% of the carbon market in terms of value<sup>2</sup>. In total, 178 million USD were

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<sup>1</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 17 October 2008,

<sup>2</sup> Peters-Stanley, M., Hamilton, K., Marcello, T. and Sjardin, M., 2011. "Back to the Future, State of the Voluntary Carbon Markets 2011. Ecosystem Marketplace & Bloomberg New Energy Finance

invested in voluntary forest carbon offset projects in 2010. However, as pointed out by Ecosystem Marketplace<sup>3</sup>, the popularity of voluntary forest carbon offsets is partly due to the expectation that they would be included in global mandatory carbon markets as soon as Parties to the UNFCCC would agree on a second commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol, which is supposed to start in 2013.

### 3. The Role of ICCAs in Adaptation Strategies

As stated before, the importance of adapting to climate change was recognized in the original UNFCCC as well. At the 16th UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Cancun, a Cancun Adaptation Framework was established to enhance action in the field of adaptation.<sup>4</sup> The decision recognizes the importance of traditional and indigenous knowledge in adaptation strategies by stating that *"enhanced action on adaptation should be undertaken in accordance with the Convention, should follow a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional and indigenous knowledge...."* The decision calls for countries to develop national adaptation plans, strategies and programmes of action, to undertake vulnerability and adaptation assessments and to build on the *"resilience of socio-economic and ecological systems, including through economic diversification and sustainable management of natural resources..."*

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#### **Community-based adaptation and resilience in the Andes<sup>5</sup>**



*The Potato Park is a unique initiative by 5 Quechua communities in the high Andes in Peru to conserve and enhance their traditional biocultural practices of agrobiodiversity conservation. It aims to conserve and enhance the over 400 varieties of potatoes that are originally bred in the area, as well as the surrounding mountain ecosystems. Especially since the past 5 years, the communities are severely impacted by climate change.*

*Community-driven seed bank in the Potato Park. Photo: Simone Lovera*

*They are confronted with increased frequency and intensity of storms, unseasonal rains, snow and hail, and a rapidly increasing incurrence of pests and diseases amongst their*

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1 See

<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf#page=4>

<sup>5</sup> <http://ipcca.info/parque-de-la-papa/about/> and

[http://www.parquedelapapa.org/esp/03parke\\_01.html](http://www.parquedelapapa.org/esp/03parke_01.html)

*crops and animals. As a response, they had to move potato production to areas that are some 200 meter higher than the usual production zones, which has significantly added to their work burden. Harvests have declined significantly to levels that are near or even below subsistence level. With support of the Indigenous Peoples Biocultural Climate Assessment Initiative administered by Asociacion ANDES, the communities are jointly trying to increase their resilience by breeding potato varieties that are better adapted to climatic extremes.*

*See also <http://ipcca.int> for more information.*

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To finance projects and programmes that help developing countries to adapt to climate change an Adaptation Fund was established. <sup>6</sup>This fund is mainly financed through a share of proceeds of 2 percent of the value of so-called certified emission reductions issued under the Clean Development Mechanism, the main carbon offset mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol.

#### **4. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and enhancing Forest Carbon Stock (REDD+)**

Forests play a key role in global climate change mitigation including, although not exclusively, because of their capacity to sequester and store carbon dioxide, one of the principal greenhouse gases. Forests as defined by the FAO cover approximately 31% of the earth' total land area, a little over 4 billion hectares<sup>7</sup>. It is estimated that deforestation and forest degradation are responsible for approximately 17% of global greenhouse gas emissions<sup>8</sup>. Forests also play an important role in global biodiversity conservation; it is estimated that forest ecosystems represent approximately 90% of terrestrial biodiversity.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, they are an indispensable source of basic necessities, wealth and spiritual wellbeing for 350 million of the world's poorest people, including an estimated 60 million Indigenous Peoples who depend almost entirely on forests for their livelihoods<sup>10</sup>. Despite these broadly recognized values, forests continued to be lost with an estimated 13 million hectares per year in the period between 2000 and 2010.<sup>11</sup> After 5 years of negotiations, the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) decided in December 2010 to encourage developing countries to: *“contribute to mitigation actions in the forest sector by undertaking the following activities, as deemed appropriate by each Party and in accordance with their respective capabilities and national circumstances:*

- (a) Reducing emissions from deforestation;*
- (b) Reducing emissions from forest degradation;*
- (c) Conservation of forest carbon stocks;*

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.adaptation-fund.org/about>

<sup>7</sup> FAO, 2010. Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010, Main Report. Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, Rome.

<sup>8</sup> Eliasch, J., 2008. Climate change: financing global forests. The Eliasch review. Office of Climate Change, London.

<sup>9</sup> UNEP, 2002. Global Environmental Outlook 3. Earthscan, UK.

<sup>10</sup> World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development, 1999, “Our Forests, Our Future, Summary report, World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development, WCFSD, Winnipeg, Canada. <http://www.iisd.org/pdf/wcfdsdsummary.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> FAO (2010)

- (d) Sustainable management of forests;  
(e) Enhancement of forest carbon stocks;<sup>12</sup>

It is often assumed that REDD+ will be developed into a system of performance-based payments for reducing forest loss-related emissions. The UNFCCC REDD+ decision states that activities should be implemented in phases, beginning with the development of strategies or action plans and later "evolving into results-based actions that should be fully measured, reported and verified". The decision actually does not explicitly state that those actions will subsequently be compensated. It merely mandates the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention "to explore financing options for the full implementation of the results-based actions" mentioned and report to the 17th Conference of the Parties in December 2011. However, at the 17th Conference of the Parties this working group could only agree on a vague statement stating that: "Agrees that results-based finance provided to developing country Parties that is new, additional and predictable may come from a wide variety of sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources";<sup>13</sup>

As mentioned above, the legal basis for REDD+ can be found in Article 4.1(d) of the UNFCCC itself. Forests are an integrated part of the climate regime since 1992. As a matter of fact, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), a joint initiative of the World Bank, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP), serving as the financial mechanism for the UNFCCC, has already spent more than 1,6 billion US dollar on a little over 300 forest-related projects and programs, leveraging 5 billion US dollar in co-funding.<sup>14</sup> There are various interpretations why countries decided, more than 15 years after signing the UNFCCC, to rapidly elaborate a work program on REDD+, but it is clear that a number of countries, including the Coalition of Rainforest Nations, had hoped this would lead to the inclusion of a broad(er) range of forest-related projects in formally recognized global carbon markets, and that this would trigger up to 30 billion USD in financial flows for paying for results-based actions.<sup>15</sup> More recently, there have been several official proposals to expand REDD+ to non-forest ecosystems. The World Bank has been actively pushing for a similar performance-based payment system for agriculture, and countries like Papua New Guinea are pushing for "blue" carbon, that is marine ecosystem conservation, to be included in carbon markets.

## 6. Reality for What?

Alas, the outcomes of the 2011 Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC in Durban make it clear that the EU is more or less alone in its willingness to commit to future

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<sup>12</sup> FCCC/CP/2010/7Add.1 (to be found on

<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf#page=2>)

<sup>13</sup> [http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/durban\\_nov\\_2011/decisions/application/pdf/cop17\\_lcao\\_outcome.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/durban_nov_2011/decisions/application/pdf/cop17_lcao_outcome.pdf), last reviewed 1 March 2012, advanced unedited version of the Decision on the Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.thegef.org/gef/SFM>, last accessed August 2011

<sup>15</sup> See also Holopainen, J. and Wit, M. (eds.), 2008. Financing Sustainable Forest Management. Tropenbos International. Wageningen, the Netherlands.

legally binding emission reductions. Other countries have only agreed to work towards "a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties" which should be agreed upon "no later than 2015...for it to come into effect and be implemented from 2020"<sup>16</sup> If there are no binding caps on emissions, there will be nothing to trade, as the demand for carbon offsets derives from the need to comply with mandatory emission reduction targets. And the EU has excluded forest carbon offsets until at least 2020. It should be noted that one of the main concerns of the EU was that the over-supply of carbon credits triggered by including REDD+ credits in its emissions trading scheme would have a depressing effect on the carbon price. Due to the uncertainty about the future of the climate regime the carbon price already decreased from an average of 33 USD per ton to a little below 6 USD per ton, making it one of the worst performing international commodities of 2011.<sup>17</sup> If carbon prices remain this low, it is highly uncertain whether the EU will include REDD+ credits after 2020.<sup>18</sup> So it is highly unlikely there will be significant carbon finance investment in REDD+ for the coming 8 years - and the situation after 2020 is even more uncertain at the moment.

In light of this uncertainty about what REDD+ will look like in the future, it is remarkable that, by June 2011, donor countries had already committed some 7.7 billion USD to programs that are supposed to make countries "ready" for REDD+<sup>19</sup>. Especially the World Bank has successfully positioned itself as a major broker in REDD+ readiness projects, charging administration and other operational costs of up to 39% over the budgets they channel to forest countries. It actually launched its first official REDD+ fund at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Bali in 2007, parallel to the launch of the negotiations on REDD+, which means that there was still a significant uncertainty about what the REDD+ regime would look like. So it was not entirely clear, and it is still not clear today, what countries should be "ready" for. The facility became operational in June 2008. Between then and August 2011, it no less than 15 donors had committed or contributed a total of 230 million USD to the so-called Readiness fund of the facility. The facility itself has invited 37 countries to submit project proposals. By March 2012, 26 of these countries had submitted Readiness Preparation Proposals, which, if approved, are supported by grants of up to 3.6 million USD.<sup>20</sup> On 25 July 2011, the FCPF announced that its Carbon Fund had become operational as well, which will initially provide payments for verified emission reductions from up to 5 countries that have been declared "ready" for REDD+ based on a review on what they call their readiness

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<sup>16</sup> Draft decision -/CP.17, Establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (Advanced unedited version), [http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/durban\\_nov\\_2011/decisions/application/pdf/cop17\\_durbanplatform.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/durban_nov_2011/decisions/application/pdf/cop17_durbanplatform.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Peters-Stanley (2011). See also

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90882/7724530.html>, last visited 2 March 2012.

<sup>18</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 17 October 2008, "Addressing the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss", COM(2008) 645 final <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0645:FIN:EN:PDF>

<sup>19</sup> REDD+ Partnership (2011). REDD+ Partnership Voluntary REDD+ Database Updated Progress Report, 11 June 2011, page 6, table 1. See <http://reddplusdatabase.org/>

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/fcp/sites/forestcarbonpartnership.org/files/Documents/PDF/Mar2012/FCPF\\_About\\_US\\_English.pdf](http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/fcp/sites/forestcarbonpartnership.org/files/Documents/PDF/Mar2012/FCPF_About_US_English.pdf) last accessed 12 March 2012



package. Until March 2012, the Carbon Fund had received approximately 205 million USD in pledges or commitments.<sup>21</sup>

The World Bank has also established a larger Forest Investment Program. This fund, which was set up in 2008, is one of the Climate Investment Funds the World Bank has set up to support programs to mitigate climate change in developing countries. The main aim of the Forest Investment Program is *"to support developing countries' REDD-efforts, providing up-front bridge financing for readiness reforms and investments identified through national REDD readiness strategy building efforts.....The FIP will finance efforts to address the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation and to overcome barriers that have hindered past efforts to do so."* By August 2011, six donors had already pledged a total of 578 million USD to the FIP, which will concentrate its investments in 8 different countries: Burkina Faso, Brazil, DRC, Ghana Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mexico and Peru.<sup>22</sup> Investments will include both grants and loans.

Instead of joining this World Bank initiative, the United Nations decided in 2008 to establish its own parallel UN-REDD program. This program is the result of cooperation between the UN Environment Programme, the UN Development Programme and the FAO. It is significantly smaller than the above-mentioned World Bank funds, until December 2010 it had only received a little over 93 million USD from just three donors, of which the Norwegian Government, with a grant of over 84 million USD, was by far the largest.<sup>23</sup>

A large number of NGOs and Indigenous Peoples' Organizations have expressed concern about the many social and environmental risks of REDD+.<sup>24</sup> It is feared performance-based payments will lead to the violation of Indigenous land rights and other forms of forest land grabbing, elite resource capture, the marginalization of women and other sectors of society with less formal land rights and economic and political power including in particular Indigenous Peoples and an overall increase of conflicts in between and within communities. The voluntary forest carbon offset market has already triggered a large number of fraudulent projects that lure Indigenous communities into false or disadvantageous contracts.<sup>25</sup> UN agencies and research institutions have echoed many of these concerns.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, as the definition of "forests" used by the UNFCCC includes monoculture tree plantations there is a significant concern REDD+ funds will be used for the expansion of monoculture tree plantations, to the detriment of biodiversity, biodiversity-dependent communities and their biocultural practices. In response to these concerns, the Parties to the UNFCCC have adopted a set of

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/fcp/sites/forestcarbonpartnership.org/files/Documents/PDF/Jul2011/FCPF%20Update%20EN%2007-25-11\\_2.pdf](http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/fcp/sites/forestcarbonpartnership.org/files/Documents/PDF/Jul2011/FCPF%20Update%20EN%2007-25-11_2.pdf) last accessed on 18 August 2011

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/cif/sites/climateinvestmentfunds.org/files/FIP%20CRP%206%20distribution%20of%20grant%20resources.pdf> last accessed on 18 August 2011

<sup>23</sup> UN-REDD Programme, 2010 Year in Review, published by UN-REDD, Geneva, Switzerland, March 2011

<sup>24</sup> E.g. <http://globalforestcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Hottest-REDD-Issues1.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> See [www.redd-monitor.org](http://www.redd-monitor.org) for reports on cases from, amongst others, Peru, Brazil, Indonesia and Paraguay.

<sup>26</sup> Peskett, L., Huberman, D., Bowen-Jones, E., Edwards, G. and Brown, J., 2008. Making REDD work for the Poor. Overseas Development Institute and IUCN, London, UK.



*Carbon Offset Plantations in Colombia. Photo: Censat Agua Viva*

safeguards, but these are non-binding and vaguely formulated so merely useful as generic policy guidance. Even the safeguard that all stakeholders should be involved in REDD+ policy development has limited value in practice as "stakeholder" is often defined as those NGOs that implement REDD+ projects themselves, which implies that there is little input from more critical actors in the process. Slightly more helpful is the formal or informal commitment of some of the main REDD+ donors, UNREDD, the World Bank and the Norwegian Government,<sup>27</sup> to the principle of Free Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples who are affected by REDD+ projects. Regrettably, there has been a tendency to apply this principle at the community level only, and it has been complicated for individual communities to assess all the possible risks and opportunities of REDD+, also because most information that is disseminated to them is heavily biased in favor of REDD+. Indigenous Peoples, which often have governance structures that are involved in national policies, are better positioned to develop well-informed views on policies like REDD+, but they have seldom been consulted as a People. Tools like Biocultural Protocols have proven to be helpful in various African and Asian countries, as they allow a community to assess and stipulate their own rights, customary governance structures and development aspirations prior to consultation.

It should be noted that the outcomes of last Conference of the Parties have significantly tempered enthusiasm for REDD+ and the expansion of REDD+ to other areas. The recent meetings of the UN-REDD and Forest Carbon Partnership Facility Policy Boards

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<sup>27</sup> UN-REDD is bound by the UN Development Guidelines, which oblige UN agencies to respect the principle of FPIC as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The World Bank Operation Policy 4.10 demands that any project financed by the Bank that affects Indigenous Peoples requires a screening by the Bank to identify which Peoples might be affected, a social assessment by the borrower, and a process of free, prior and informed consultation with the affected Indigenous Peoples at each state of the project to "*ascertain their broad community support for the project*". The Norwegian Government has informally declared its adherence to the FPIC principle.

that took place from 25 to 30 March 2012 in Asuncion were marked by an atmosphere of austerity and lack of willingness of donor countries to commit to additional resources, with donor representatives literally asking the meeting "Rea(d)dy for what?". It is clear that the interest in REDD+ is rapidly declining now that the generous public investments up to now might not trigger the billions in private investment that were previously expected. So the current readiness funding might be more or less 'as good as it gets' with REDD. If this funding is mainly invested in the elaborating of expensive Monitoring, Reporting and Verification systems, we might end up in a situation in which this entire REDD+ circus will deliver nothing else but a more detailed registration of how much forests we are losing, and a number of national Payments for Environmental Services systems that will remain severely underfunded - risking frustration amongst forest owners who have gained a right to compensation for reducing forest loss, implying that they are entitled to destroy their forests if they are not paid any compensation.

While an increasing number of NGOs and IPOs are pointing out that the social and environmental problems of REDD+ are inherent to the system of performance-based payments for emission reductions it promotes<sup>28</sup>, there is a real need to rescue forest policy from REDD+ by redirecting Readiness funding. An increasing number of forest policy-makers, especially in the South, are sincerely interested in developing policies to reduce forest loss that avoid the social and environmental risks and the financial unsustainability of performance-based payments.

## **7. The Role of ICCAs in Sustainable Forest and Climate Policies**

ICCAs might be able to play an important role in addressing this potential post-REDD crisis. The essential characteristic of an ICCA is that the *voluntary* management decisions and efforts of the community have led to (or are leading to) the conservation of biodiversity, ecological functions and associated cultural values, regardless of the objectives of management originally set out by the community. ICCAs are a reflection of endogenous, biocultural approaches to sustainable livelihood that have developed – sometimes for centuries - on a voluntary basis. In the overwhelming majority cases, these initiatives have been developed without any significant financial or other support from outside actors. In fact, the autonomy of the governance structure of the Indigenous people or community has often played a key role in the environmental and social effectiveness of the initiative. This implies that ICCAs do not only provide an important alternative to performance-based payment systems from a point of view of environmental and socially sustainability, but also from a point of view of financial sustainability. As ICCAs face a lot of internal and external threats, it is important to assess their resilience and strengthen its enhancement, though.

Moreover, ICCAs embed much of the resilience of the biocultural systems that support the livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities, and are crucial to their capacity to adapt to climate change. For that, ICCAs should be at the heart of adaptation projects and programs that respond to community needs and aspirations. But it is of utmost importance that ICCAs are supported in an appropriate way, as it has been known for some time that misguided forms of recognition and support can destroy the very community values and governance structures that form the basis of the environmental, social, cultural and economy sustainability of ICCAs. For example, misguided initiatives to "strengthen land tenure" by privatizing the commons and

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<sup>28</sup> See for example [http://noredd.makenoise.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NOREDD-letter\\_21sept.pdf](http://noredd.makenoise.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NOREDD-letter_21sept.pdf)

unsustainable and divisive Payments for Environmental Services schemes can undermine and even destroy ICCAs.

## **8. Recommendations to the ICCA Consortium**

In the light of the threats of climate change and the importance of ICCAs for genuinely sustainable climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies it is recommended that:

- Climate change policy is recognized as a priority for the Consortium;
- the ICCA Consortium mobilizes significant human and other resources to raise awareness amongst climate policy makers of the importance of ICCAs for climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and the need for appropriate forms of support for ICCAs. This would include:
  - the publication and dissemination of briefing papers and other sources of information on ICCAs, their importance for climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and the need to provide appropriate support;
  - the organization of side events on the importance of -appropriately supporting - ICCAs;
  - the organization of workshops and other events with existing and potential allies to build the case for ICCAs and mutually strengthen awareness raising and advocacy campaigns for ICCAs, food and energy sovereignty, Indigenous rights and endogenous development ('buen vivir');
- the ICCA Consortium considers the active participation in the proposed Community Conservation Resilience Assessment.