



**SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME:  
25 YEARS OF ENGAGEMENT  
WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

**AUTHORS**

Terence Hay-Edie, Alejandra Pero and Anna Lisa Jose

**MANAGING EDITORS**

Terence Hay-Edie and Yoko Watanabe

**COPY EDITOR**

Chris Dickson

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Abu-Baker Wandera, Ana Beatriz Barona, Ana Maria Varea, Angelica Shamerina, Badia Sahmy, Beatriz Schmitt, Carolina Amaya, Catharina Dwihastarini, Diana Salvemini, Doley Tshering, Ibironke Favour Olubamise, Jennifer Laughlin, Joao do Rosario Pereira, Josep Gari, Juan Sergio Castro, Kin Yii Yong, Livia Moura, Manuel Mavila, Marie-Laure Mpeck Nyemeck, Martin Sommerschuh, Nehemiah Murusuri, Nguyen Thi Thu Huyen, Nina Kantcheva, Penninah Zaninka, Sam Johnston, Sarah Wyatt, Shin Shin Lee, Stella Zaarh, Sulan Chen, Yi Liu, Yoko Watanabe.

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We wish to honour and express solidarity with the thousands of Indigenous Peoples, both past and present, who have struggled to protect their lands and territories, maintain their traditional ways of life, and transmit their ancestral wisdom to future generations. This publication is dedicated to finding ways to amplify and recommit to renewed partnerships with Indigenous Peoples.

**PUBLICATION COORDINATOR**

Anna Lisa Jose and Rissa Edoe

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Camilo Salomon @ [www.cjsalomon.com](http://www.cjsalomon.com)

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# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>Preface</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: SGP engagement with Indigenous Peoples</b>	<b>6</b>
SGP portfolio of investments with Indigenous Peoples	7
Regional Distribution	8
GEF Focal Area and thematic distribution	10
Type of Projects	13
Grant-size of projects	16
<b>CHAPTER 2: Evolution of SGP's engagement with Indigenous Peoples</b>	<b>18</b>
SGP grant-making processes and decentralized governance	18
Evolution of SGP's approach in engaging with Indigenous Peoples	18
Landscape-level small grants approaches: protected areas	21
<b>CHAPTER 3: SGP operational tools in partnering with Indigenous Peoples</b>	<b>22</b>
Almanario approach with Indigenous women	22
Use of for participatory video for grant proposals	23
Strengthening of traditional knowledge	25
Indigenous Peoples Fellowship initiative	27
<b>CHAPTER 4: SGP partnerships with Indigenous Peoples</b>	<b>32</b>
Global Support Initiative to Indigenous Peoples and Community-Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCA-GSI)	32
Community-Based REDD+ (CBR+)	33
Community-Based Adaptation (CBA)	35
Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS)	36
South-South exchange: International Network for Mountain Indigenous Peoples (INMIP)	36
Partnering with Indigenous Peoples in UNFCCC climate negotiations	37
Artisanal and small-scale gold mining	38
Indigenous Peoples' Access to Energy	39
<b>CHAPTER 5: Future directions</b>	<b>40</b>
Scaling up SGP assistance to Indigenous Peoples	40
<b>ANNEX 1: SGP countries with presence of Indigenous Peoples</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>ANNEX 2: Programming recommendations for SGP OP7</b>	<b>45</b>

# Foreword

A growing body of scientific evidence shows that the lands and territories of Indigenous Peoples, stretching from the forests of the Amazon to the Congo Basin, to the peatlands of South-East Asia, and all the way to the Arctic tundra, are fundamental to safeguarding the global environment, and preventing planetary tipping points. The task for the multilateral system to effectively help Indigenous Peoples continue to protect and defend these territories, requires a concerted effort that brings together governments, international NGOs, and organizations across the UN system to identify new and creative ways to secure the full and effective participation of communities, including a reflection on past injustices resulting from earlier conservation models.

Put simply, for Indigenous Peoples to gain direct access to funding from multilateral entities at the global level, requires a high level of capacity to deal with bureaucratic requirements, which can often present insurmountable challenges to many oral cultures. A faster and more expedited process to ensure country-level direct access via national grant-making systems that use national languages, decentralized selection procedures, tailored formats and the like, is evidently needed. As one of the early pioneers working with Indigenous Peoples, the experience of the Small Grants Programme (SGP), funded mainly by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has been repeatedly recognized as one of the “primary modalities of engagement” (IEO 2017) for Indigenous Peoples with the GEF.

A key purpose of this publication is to provide an account of SGP’s experience working with Indigenous Peoples over the last twenty-five years. The publication celebrates past achievements and advances critical lessons that can be used in forging new partnerships with Indigenous Peoples in future programming cycles, including opportunities to employ blended finance solutions. Building on the learning-by-doing experience gained over six Operational Phases, combining resources from the GEF with those of other bilateral donors, the SGP has cumulatively delivered financial support to over 25,000 community-based projects with civil society organizations in 133 countries at the global level. Among those countries, Indigenous Peoples’ have been vital partners in at least 94 countries.

UNDP and the GEF are committed to ensure that the operational insights, governance mechanisms, and risk-assessed flexibilities to administrative and procurement rules pioneered by the SGP are documented. This body of experience can help Indigenous Peoples to become effectively engaged in these efforts not just through small grants but also expanding their capabilities to deal with medium and full-size GEF projects. The publication notes that it is incumbent on the SGP, as a GEF Corporate Programme nested within

the partnership of GEF agencies, to seek synergies and share solutions in acting as a tried-and-tested delivery mechanism. In this role, we welcome that the SGP has entered into dialogue with other sister initiatives such as the World Bank Dedicated Grant Mechanism (DGM) for Indigenous Peoples, the GEF-funded pioneer project known as the Inclusive Conservation Initiative, as well as various donors and vertical trust funds to ensure that these lessons are fully captured towards the design of the GEF's next replenishment cycle, and a new era of joint collaboration.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pradeep Kurukulasuriya'.

**Pradeep Kurukulasuriya**  
*Executive Coordinator, Nature, Climate  
and Energy, Bureau for Policy and  
Programme Support, United Nations  
Development Programme*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gustavo Fonseca'.

**Gustavo Fonseca**  
*Director of Programs  
Global Environment Facility*

# Preface

It is timely to reflect that the Global Environment Facility has become a major player in the multilateral financial architecture, and that its seven replenishment cycles have made a positive contribution to the lives of Indigenous Peoples. I note with appreciation that the GEF has developed nearly three decades of programming experience working with Indigenous Peoples through its flagship Small Grants Programme. Also through the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG) which started in 2013, in the recent update of its social and environmental safeguards and fiduciary standards, as well as through a cohort of new initiatives with a growing number of GEF agencies.

In my capacity as the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, I had personally requested support from the UNDP in 2016 to initiate a process of documenting its experience partnering with Indigenous Peoples through the SGP. As one of the largest global financing mechanisms for Indigenous Peoples at the time, the operational experience of the SGP holds valuable lessons for other donors, both in terms of operational modalities, as well as in the models of shared decision-making and governance. With the emergence of the Green Climate Fund some six years ago, I have been advocating for these good practices to be incorporated and mainstreamed into an improved architecture of international climate finance for Indigenous Peoples. The present publication is a timely contribution on the value of SGP within the wider UN system, documenting SGP's long-standing partnership with Indigenous Peoples for over 25 years, but also in identifying areas for continued improvement.

Indigenous Peoples networks have observed that international climate finance has the ambition to be 'transformational and innovative', but we have so far not yet witnessed the required paradigm shifts. Indigenous Peoples want to prevent history repeating itself through the violation of minimum international human rights standards contained in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). This Declaration recognizes the right of Indigenous Peoples to have their free, prior and informed consent obtained when a project is being designed and implemented in their traditional territories. Governments and multi-lateral agencies are called upon to implement the UNDRIP and for those governments who ratified the ILO Convention No. 169, they are urged to comply with their obligations under this Convention. After the adoption of the UNDRIP by the UN General Assembly in 2007, several multilateral agencies such as the UNDP, the World Bank, the Green Climate Fund, among others, have adopted their own policies on Indigenous Peoples. We expect that these multilateral agencies will be guided by their own Indigenous Peoples' policies. Systematic efforts should be made to raise the awareness of their staff so they can effectively implement these policies and standards. There should be allocation of adequate resources for capacity building, research, advocacy and monitoring to ensure better implementation of the UNDRIP and ILO Convention 169. It is important to ensure the

inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in programmes and projects which have direct impacts on them and to enable them to self-select their representatives who will participate in the negotiations under the newly established UNFCCC Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, as well as towards the post-2020 CBD Global Biodiversity Framework.

We have developed our community protocols and community-based monitoring and information systems (CBMIS), including the 'Indigenous Navigator' that can now be used for monitoring compliance with the international human rights standards, and the progress and work around the UN Sustainable Development Goals. As Indigenous Peoples, we are ready to contribute to the required paradigm shift and transformative agenda to meet the SDGs. In this year of a global pandemic, humanity is being challenged to fundamentally rethink our sustainable development trajectory in line with planetary limits.

We are often faced with hard questions as to how to jointly design projects and programmes which truly valorize, and do not exploit, the traditional knowledge and wisdom of our ancestors. The experience of the SGP records a number of good faith efforts to reimagine respectful ways of working between Indigenous Peoples and the UN system, which I hope will be a useful reference for the challenges which still lie ahead.



**Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz**, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Tebtebba (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education)

# Acronyms

<b>ABS</b>	Access and Benefit-Sharing
<b>AR5</b>	Fifth Assessment Report
<b>ASGM</b>	Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining
<b>CBA</b>	Community-Based Adaptation
<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>CBO</b>	Community-Based Organization
<b>CBR</b>	Community-Based Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
<b>CEB</b>	Chief Executives Board for Coordination
<b>COMDEKS</b>	Community Development and Knowledge Management for Satoyama Initiative
<b>COMPACT</b>	Community Management of Protected Areas for Conservation
<b>COP</b>	Conference of Parties
<b>CPMT</b>	Central Programme Management Team
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>DGM</b>	Dedicated Grant Mechanism
<b>EMRIP</b>	Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
<b>GCF</b>	Green Climate Fund
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>GEF GOLD</b>	GEF Global Opportunities for Long-Term Development in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining Programme
<b>GPAP</b>	Global Programme on Protected Areas
<b>IASG</b>	Inter-Agency Support Group
<b>ICCAs</b>	Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
<b>ICCA-GSI</b>	Global Support Initiative to Indigenous and Community-Conserved Territories and Areas
<b>IEO</b>	Independent Evaluation Office
<b>IFIP</b>	International Funders of Indigenous Peoples
<b>IIPFCC</b>	International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization of the United Nations
<b>INMIP</b>	International Network for Mountain Indigenous Peoples
<b>IPS</b>	Indigenous Peoples
<b>IPBES</b>	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
<b>IPCC</b>	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
<b>IPLCS</b>	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities



<b>IPMG</b>	Indigenous Peoples Major Group
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
<b>LC</b>	Local communities
<b>LCIPP</b>	UNFCCC Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform
<b>LVG</b>	Low Value Grants
<b>NSC</b>	National Steering Committee
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>OP</b>	Operational Phase
<b>POPP</b>	UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures
<b>REDD</b>	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
<b>RRI</b>	Rights and Resources Initiative
<b>SBSTTA</b>	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SEPLS</b>	Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes
<b>SES</b>	Social and Environmental Safeguards
<b>SGP</b>	Small Grants Programme
<b>SIDS</b>	Small Island Developing States
<b>REP</b>	Right Energy Partnership
<b>TILCEPA</b>	Theme on Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDG</b>	United Nations Development Group
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNDRIP</b>	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
<b>UNEP WCMC</b>	United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNFPII</b>	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
<b>UNF</b>	United Nations Foundation
<b>UN-SWAP</b>	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan
<b>WHS</b>	World Heritage Sites
<b>WDPA</b>	World Database on Protected Areas
<b>WRI</b>	World Resources Institute

# Introduction

Local actions are often the best way to develop, field test and demonstrate solutions that show that protection of the environment also contributes to sustainable human development. Since 1992, the Small Grants Programme (SGP) has pioneered this approach through the provision of financial and technical support to civil society initiatives that address both global environmental challenges, as well as enhancing the livelihoods and well-being of local communities.

Financed primarily by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), SGP engages directly with civil society organizations including community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and persons with disabilities, across a range of demand-driven priorities. These areas include biodiversity conservation and sustainable use; climate change mitigation and adaptation; sustainable land management; protection of international waters; and the sound management of chemicals and waste, including mercury.

The publication takes stock of the SGP's engagement with Indigenous Peoples over more than two-and-a-half decades from 1992 to early 2019. The review is based on multiple sources, including: (a) an independent report titled 'GEF SGP Support to Indigenous Peoples: a 25-Year Review' (Ledwith 2019);<sup>1</sup> (b) a GEF Independent Evaluation Office evaluation on GEF's engagement with Indigenous Peoples (IEO 2018);<sup>2</sup> (c) the global SGP database; and (d) SGP Annual Monitoring Reports from 2011 to 2019.<sup>3</sup>

In total, from 1992 to 2019 the SGP has invested around US\$163 million to implement 5,832 projects that have benefited Indigenous Peoples, representing 37 percent of all project-level small grants in the SGP participating countries where Indigenous Peoples are present. SGP project grant sizes awarded to Indigenous Peoples appear to follow the same trend as the overall SGP project grant award sizes. On average, 54 percent of all project grants involving Indigenous Peoples were more than \$25,000, with an average grant award size of \$27,945.

Chapter 1 presents an overview of the SGP's engagement with Indigenous Peoples from 1992 to 2019. Chapter 2 summarizes the SGP grant approval process, including its decentralized governance structure, and the evolution of its efforts to better engage Indigenous Peoples over time. Chapter 3 presents SGP's operational experience, including flexible formats and participatory methodologies, relevant for donors and agencies to partner with Indigenous Peoples. Chapter 4 summarizes some of the SGP's main partnership initiatives working with Indigenous Peoples in strengthening territorial governance, responding to climate change through community-based adaptation, engaging with community approaches to REDD+,<sup>4</sup> and supporting systems for enhanced resilience and livelihoods in socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes. Chapter 5 concludes with a reflection on experiences, suggestions of areas for improvement in programming and operations, and an examination of future directions.

<sup>1</sup> Ledwith, L. (2019) Strengthening GEF SGP Support to Indigenous Peoples: A 25- year review

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gefco.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/files/indigenous-peoples-2017\\_0.pdf](https://www.gefco.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/files/indigenous-peoples-2017_0.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://sgp.undp.org/our-approach-153/monitoring-and-evaluation.html>

<sup>4</sup> REDD+ refers to "reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries," in the terminology of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (see <https://unfccc.int/topics/land-use/workstreams/reddplus>).



### Message from the Global Manager

As we celebrate SGP's pioneer work and achievements in engaging with Indigenous Peoples close to three decades with its extensive portfolio, we hope that this publication will provide critical lessons to go further in forging new partnerships and engagement with Indigenous Peoples as a path towards improved global environment and sustainable development. SGP will continue in its grantmaking and 'Grantmakers+' role to advocate for the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and to collaborate with an expanding number of donors to enhance support and increase Indigenous Peoples access to international finance. SGP is committed to furthering its engagement with Indigenous Peoples and achieve even greater results in cooperation with all partners and supporters.



# Background



PHOTO BY LEONARDO PARRA,  
SGP COLOMBIA

There are an estimated 370 million Indigenous Peoples in almost 100 countries.<sup>5</sup> While there is no universal definition for Indigenous Peoples, the UN International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples identifies Indigenous Peoples as distinct peoples that inhabited a country before the time of conquest or colonization and that have retained cultural, social, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from the dominant societies where they live.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, self-identification as being Indigenous or tribal is a fundamental criterion to international norms and standards for duty-bearers to assist Indigenous Peoples as rights-holders.<sup>7</sup>

Indigenous Peoples are arguably among the most vulnerable groups in the world. Although Indigenous Peoples only make up some 5 percent of the global population, they account for up to 15 percent of the extreme poor. In many countries, where gains are being made in poverty reduction, Indigenous Peoples are often at risk of being omitted from national statistical data censuses, and being left behind.<sup>8</sup> The UN Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG) on Indigenous Issues, and Chief Executives Board (CEB) for Coordination of the UN System have advocated for an “*integrated, coherent, and coordinated approach*” to Indigenous Peoples, emphasizing the need to strengthen the disaggregation of data, in particular at the country level — taking into account age, gender, disability, race, and other vulnerabilities, as well as their intersectionality.

As noted by the UN Secretary General’s Call to Action on Human Rights launched in February 2020, environmental human rights defenders are increasingly under attack, with new records of physical attacks and undue criminalization set each year. This challenge is especially acute for Indigenous Peoples. Only 10 percent of Indigenous Peoples’ lands are the subject of formal land titles, and land grabs and illegal mining continue to occur on both legally designated and unrecognized Indigenous lands, including a significant increase in encroachment during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Indigenous Peoples speak more than 4,000 of the world’s 6,700 languages. Estimates by UNESCO suggest that more than 50 percent of all languages will become extinct by 2100, with the majority of them coming from indigenous groups. It is estimated that one indigenous language dies every two weeks. Indigenous languages are not only methods of communication, but complex systems of knowledge that have developed over millennia. They are central to the identity of Indigenous Peoples, the preservation of their cultures, worldviews and visions, and an expression of self-determination. When indigenous languages are under threat, so too are Indigenous Peoples themselves.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> World Bank <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/indigenouspeoples>.

<sup>6</sup> International Labour Organization, C169 – Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169).

<sup>7</sup> Terms for Indigenous Peoples have evolved over time and are continuing to evolve. For example, terms used to refer to Indigenous Peoples, depending on the region or context, may include ethnic minorities, tribal peoples, aboriginal, indian, adivasi, amerindian, basarwa, bushmen, pygmy, san, hunter-gatherer, nomadic, and pastoralist.

<sup>8</sup> Gillette H. Hall, Georgetown University, Washington DC and Harry Anthony Patrinos, World Bank, Washington, DC. Indigenous Peoples, Poverty, and Development, June 2014.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development A/HRC/42/NGO/53, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/253/22/PDF/G1925322.pdf?OpenElement>.

Indigenous Peoples live predominately in rural areas and territories where their distinct cultures, worldviews, and practices are often closely connected to nature. It has been estimated that Indigenous Peoples have rights to and/or manage at least 37.9 million square kilometres of land (28.1% of the world's land area).<sup>10</sup> Some studies estimate that 80% of this land area overlaps with much of the world's remaining biodiversity and critical ecosystems.<sup>11</sup>

Indigenous Peoples have been found to be strong land stewards and often manage their territories in ways that are compatible with, and actively support, biodiversity conservation. This important role of traditional knowledge in the conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit sharing of genetic resources is recognized by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and traditional practices span the fields of health care and agriculture, as well as the performing arts and textiles. As such, some of these skills are relevant to adapting to global climate change and mitigating the impact of disasters.<sup>12</sup>

Environmental degradation, encroachment by extractive industries, logging and large-scale infrastructure projects, together with climate change, are disproportionately threatening the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples, including their lands and resources. A growing body of research indicates that direct interventions are an effective and efficient approach to supporting Indigenous Peoples' ability to execute their own sustainable development initiatives, such as greater land tenure security, capacity building and natural resource governance.<sup>13</sup>

Over the last 20 years, multilateral support for Indigenous Peoples has been growing. Several international instruments and mechanisms have been adopted in support of Indigenous Peoples' rights, including: (a) the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII); (b) the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) passed in 2007; (c) the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP); (d) the investigative functions of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and (e) the UN System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Indigenous Peoples, approved by UN General Assembly in Sept 2014.

According to its Principles and Guidance on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (2012), the GEF has similarly adopted and updated a number of policies that relate to Indigenous Peoples, including: (a) the GEF Policy on Agency Minimum Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards; (b) the GEF Policy on Stakeholder Engagement; (c) the Recommended Minimum Fiduciary Standards for GEF Implementing and Executing Agencies; and (d) the GEF policies and guidelines relating to the project cycle and review by the Secretariat.

With respect to the Rio Conventions for which the GEF serves as the financial mechanism, Indigenous Peoples have also become increasingly active within the UN CBD, through the Working Group on Article 8j, as well as through the newly established Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

<sup>10</sup> Garnett, Stephen, et al. A spatial overview of the global importance of indigenous lands for conservation, 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Toledo, V. M., 2001. Indigenous peoples and biodiversity. In: Levin, S. et al. (Eds.) Encyclopedia of Biodiversity. Academic Press.

<sup>12</sup> Robbins, Jim, Native Knowledge: What Ecologists Are Learning from Indigenous People, Yale Environment 360. April 26, 2018. <https://e360.yale.edu/features/native-knowledge-what-ecologists-are-learning-from-indigenous-people>

<sup>13</sup> Ding, Helen, et al. Climate Benefits, Tenure Costs: The Economic Case For Securing Indigenous Land Rights in the Amazon, 2016. See also, Garnett, Stephen, et al. A spatial overview of the global importance of indigenous lands for conservation, 2018.

# SGP engagement with Indigenous Peoples

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) has been pioneering with its engagement with Indigenous Peoples over the past nearly three decades in addressing global environmental issues and livelihood improvements. In response to a request from the former UN special rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, Vicky Tauli-Corpuz, a portfolio review of SGP's engagement with Indigenous Peoples was initiated.<sup>14</sup> The objective of the study was to review the entire SGP portfolio related to Indigenous Peoples since its initiation in 1992 until the end of 2018, to: (a) understand the depth and breadth of SGP support to Indigenous Peoples; (b) identify trends and good practices; and (c) recommend opportunities to strengthen continued support to Indigenous Peoples during its 7th Operational Phase (OP7) from 2020-2024.

The review drew upon more than 25 years of data collected on SGP projects since the Pilot Phase in 1992, the experiences of SGP country teams and stakeholders, and personal insights gathered directly from Indigenous Peoples themselves. The findings from the exercise are summarized below. Overall, the report recognizes that SGP's community-based approach of providing innovative, flexible and responsive finance to Indigenous Peoples provides valuable lessons to the growing interest amongst international donors in partnering with Indigenous Peoples.



<sup>14</sup> Ledwith, L. (2019) Strengthening GEF SGP Support to Indigenous Peoples: A 25-year review of SGP's Project Portfolio, <https://sgp.undp.org/all-documents/publications/1457-strengthening-gef-sgp-support-to-indigenous-peoples-a-25-year-review/file.html>

## SGP portfolio of investments with Indigenous Peoples

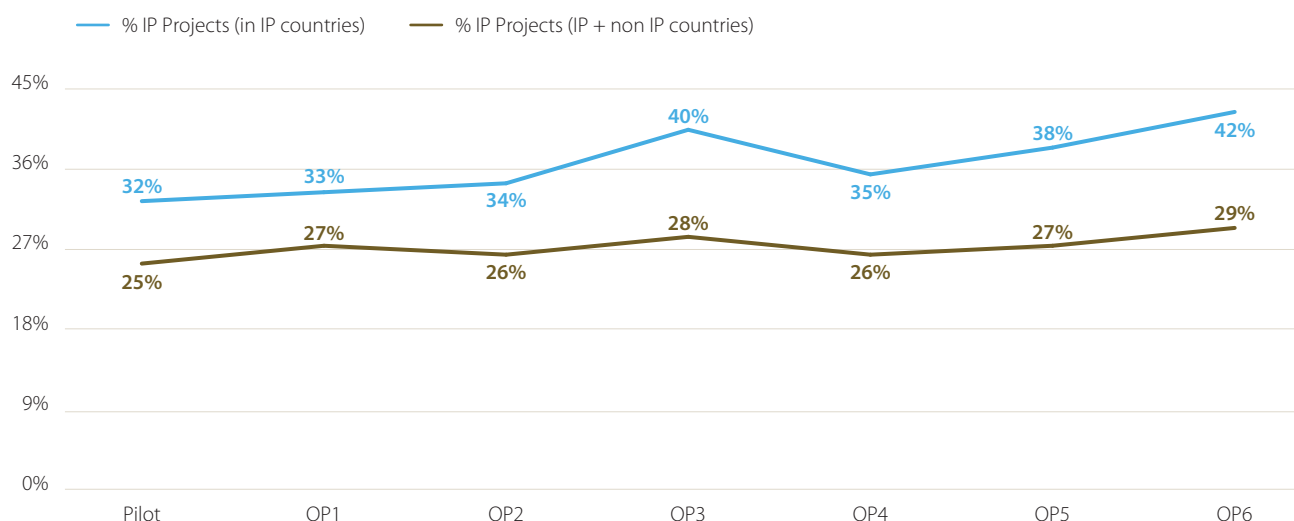
Since 1992, over six successive Operational Phases combining resources from the GEF and other bilateral donors and foundations (i.e. Australia, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, UN Foundation, MAVA Foundation and others, described in Chapter 4), the SGP has delivered financial support of over US\$600 million in grants to civil society organizations and partners in some 133 countries globally. Among those, Indigenous Peoples' are recognized as present in at least 94 countries (Annex 1).

On the basis of the review carried out on SGP work from 1992 to 2018, SGP has invested around US\$163 million to implement 5,832 projects that have benefited Indigenous Peoples, representing 37 percent of all project-level small grants in the SGP participating countries where Indigenous Peoples are present. In addition, it is about 27 percent of the entire SGP portfolio when covering all SGP participating countries. These SGP projects support a range of Indigenous Peoples' needs and opportunities and encompass all the thematic areas that are covered by the GEF, namely: biodiversity conservation; climate change adaptation and mitigation; land degradation; chemicals and waste; and international waters.

SGP grant support to Indigenous Peoples has been steadily expanding. In 2008, the Joint Evaluation of the SGP had noted that *"in most instances, Indigenous People were benefiting from the SGP project grants because they are generally settled in the remote biodiversity-rich areas that are the geographic focus of the SGP country programmes rather than being explicitly targeted."*<sup>15</sup>

An increased explicit focus on Indigenous Peoples occurred towards the end of the SGP's 3<sup>rd</sup> Operational Phase (OP3, 2005-2007) at which time the programme updated its global strategy and operational processes to cater to the needs and capacities of Indigenous Peoples (see Chapter 2). Since that time, the representation of Indigenous Peoples in the SGP portfolio has increased fairly consistently over successive Operational Phases (OP4, OP5 and OP6). At the time of the quantitative analysis that concluded in April 2019, Indigenous Peoples' projects represented 42 percent of project portfolio investment during the initial years of OP6 (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Percentage of SGP Projects that support Indigenous Peoples (IP) 1992-2018**



Sources: SGP Project Database; SGP Country Programme staff and partners.

<sup>15</sup> GEF IEO and UNDP IEO, Joint Evaluation of the Small Grants Programme (SGP) June 2008, Evaluation Report No. 39, page 9.

## Regional Distribution

The 2019 analysis revealed that the portfolio of SGP projects with Indigenous Peoples, when measured by the total investment, has been highest in Africa, followed by Asia-Pacific and Latin America. Overall, the ratio of SGP projects with Indigenous Peoples has also been steadily increasing, with Asia and the Pacific experiencing the most marked increase from OP1 to OP6 (see Figure 2), partially due to SGP's expansion and increased financing in the Pacific where Indigenous Peoples are predominant.

**Table 1: SGP Project investments supporting Indigenous Peoples 1992-2018**

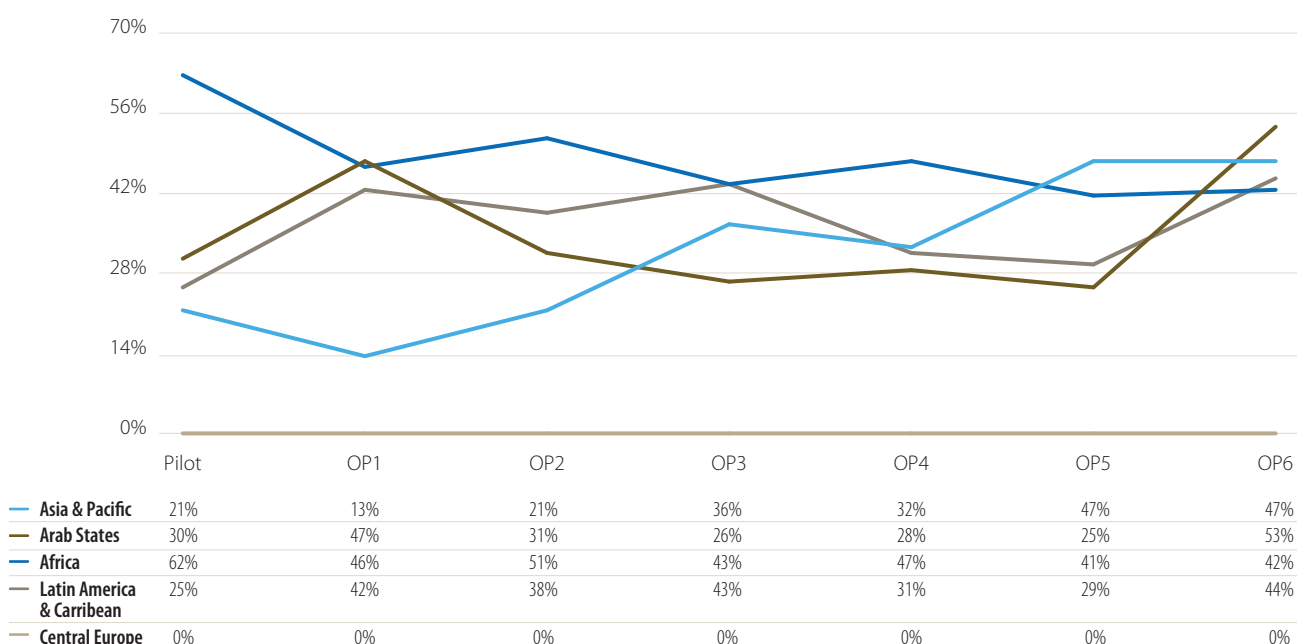
	TOTAL PROJECTS	INDIGENOUS PEOPLE-LED PROJECTS	INDIGENOUS PEOPLE BENEFICIARY PROJECTS	TOTAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLE PROJECTS (LED + BENEFICIARY)	PERCENTAGE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE PROJECTS	TOTAL PROJECT INVESTMENT	TOTAL INVESTMENT IN INDIGENOUS PEOPLE PROJECTS
SGP participating countries	21,783	3,059	2,773	5,832	27%	\$596,251,514	\$162,973,432
SGP participating countries with Indigenous Peoples*	15,882	3,059	2,773	5,832	37%	\$435,792,895	\$162,973,432
Asia & Pacific**	4,904	805	936	1,741	36%	\$128,680,826	\$49,956,886
Arab States**	787	127	113	240	30%	\$22,744,582	\$7,779,038
Africa**	4,704	1,084	1,021	2,105	45%	\$136,313,542	\$59,353,204
Latin America & Caribbean**	4,899	1,043	703	1,746	36%	\$128,689,222	\$45,884,304
Central Europe**	588	0	0	0	0%	\$19,364,724	\$0

Source: SGP Project Database; SGP Country Programme staff and partners

\* See Appendix A for list of SGP Countries with Indigenous-People populations.

\*\* Only SGP Countries with Indigenous Peoples within its borders and that responded to the survey are included.

**Figure 2: Percentage of SGP projects supporting Indigenous Peoples by Operational Phase and region 1992-2018**





The scope, size, and geographic location of the Indigenous People stakeholders has often been as diverse as the landscapes and seascapes of the SGP country strategies. Further variation has existed in the level of control that Indigenous Peoples have in managing their SGP grants. Depending on the country context, SGP projects may either be: directly managed by Indigenous Peoples organizations themselves, or else executed with the support of intermediary NGOs. For example, in the Latin America and Caribbean region, SGP country programmes in Colombia have typically directly awarded grants to Indigenous Peoples organizations, which are led by the Indigenous Peoples themselves, whilst in Paraguay the projects are often implemented in partnership between NGOs and Indigenous Peoples.

Across countries and regions of the world, the proportion of SGP projects with Indigenous Peoples varies significantly. In some countries, Indigenous Peoples account for the majority of the portfolio. For many SGP country programmes in the Pacific, 81-100 percent of the projects benefit Indigenous Peoples. In other countries, despite their confirmed presence in the country, there are no reported projects benefitting Indigenous Peoples. An important determinant of the portfolio ratio is that in some countries Indigenous Peoples comprise less than 1-2 percent of the population. In others, Indigenous Peoples comprise the majority. Interviews with SGP country programme staff and Indigenous Peoples themselves have identified a series of additional factors for the large disparities, listed in Table 2.

**Table 2: Factors influencing large investment variations between countries**

**FACTORS INFLUENCING INVESTMENT VARIATIONS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES BETWEEN SGP COUNTRIES**

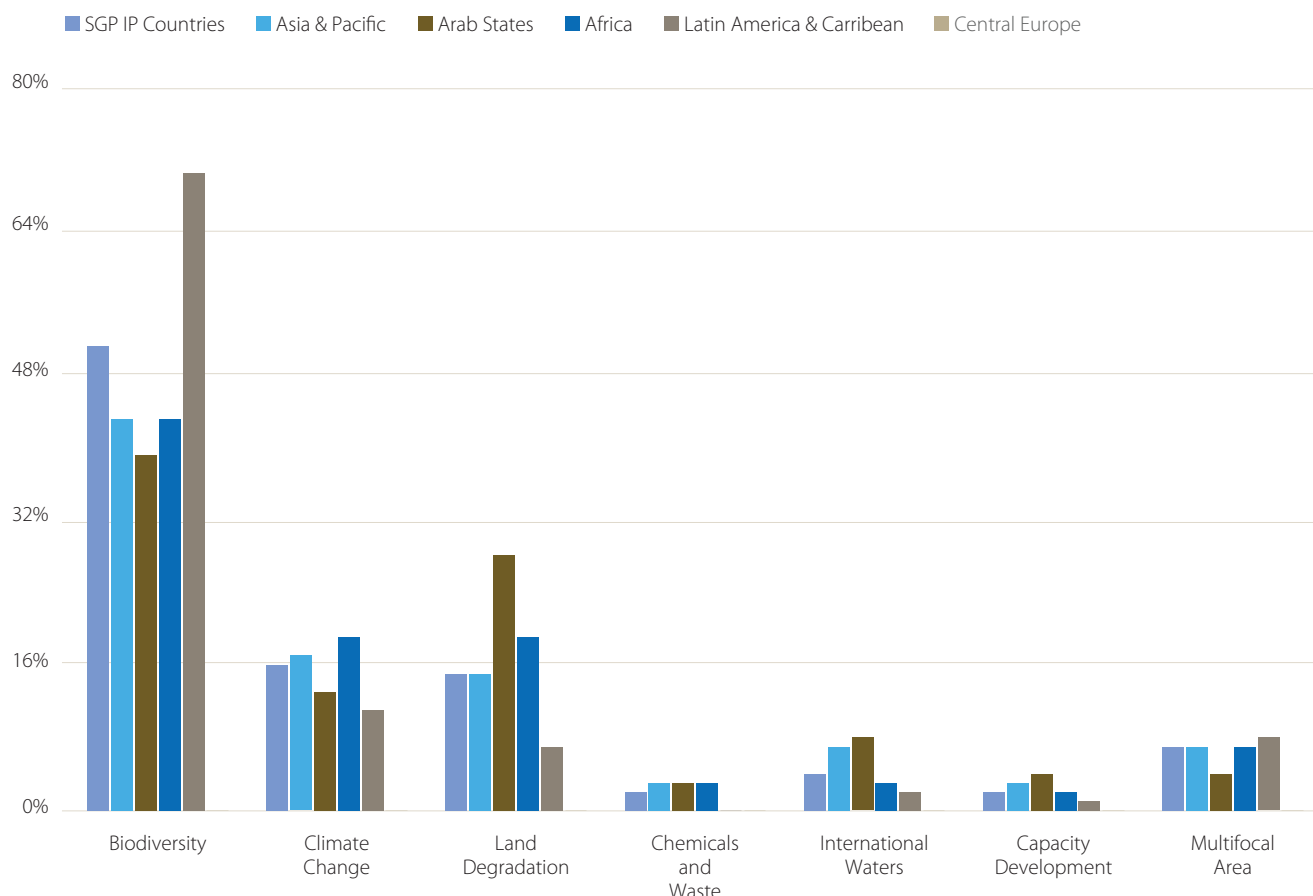
1	Disconnect between the areas inhabited by Indigenous Peoples and the priority landscapes and seascapes identified in the SGP country programme strategies (CPS)
2	Complexity in the political circumstances occurring in some countries that restrict the SGP county programme from acknowledging Indigenous Peoples and supporting them
3	Insufficient awareness amongst a small group of SGP staff regarding the strategy of the SGP Central Programme Management Team (CPMT) on strengthening the support to Indigenous Peoples and including them in the CPS frameworks
4	Competing SGP investment needs within the country (e.g. other marginalized and vulnerable communities deemed most in need of assistance)
5	Inability of some SGP country programmes to successfully persuade Indigenous Peoples to engage, due to lack of trust amongst Indigenous Peoples towards large institutions, or insufficient awareness amongst Indigenous Peoples of the investment opportunities and benefits
6	Insufficient human and financial resources at the country- programme level to increase existing support to Indigenous Peoples at current capacity levels
7	Lack of availability or willingness of NGOs or community-based organizations to propose and lead projects benefitting Indigenous Peoples
8	Inadequate communication with Indigenous Peoples about future priorities of the SGP Country Programme, including limited lead times for request for proposals, make it challenging for Indigenous Peoples to develop project concepts and/or community support in time

## GEF Focal Area and thematic distribution

SGP has provided grants to Indigenous Peoples across a range of thematic areas, needs and opportunities. Of those themes, biodiversity continues to be the dominant GEF focal area for SGP projects involving Indigenous Peoples, with the themes of climate change and land degradation steadily increasing. Since Indigenous Peoples often inhabit areas of high biological diversity, a strong correlation between areas of biological diversity and areas where high cultural diversity has been established.<sup>16</sup>

The aggregated totals of SGP projects are presented by region and by focal area in Figure 3. Approximately 51 percent of SGP projects working with Indigenous Peoples are allocated under the biodiversity focal area; 16 percent under climate change; 15 percent under land degradation; and the remaining 18 percent under international waters, chemicals and waste, and multi-focal area interventions. These figures are in line with the focal area distribution of the overall SGP portfolio, where biodiversity projects represent nearly half of the investments, while other focal area projects are increasing.<sup>17</sup>

**Figure 3: Percentage of Indigenous Peoples Projects by Focal Area 1998-2018**



Sources: SGP Project Database; SGP Country Programme staff and partners

\* Only SGP Countries with Indigenous Peoples within its borders and that responded to the survey are included.

<sup>16</sup> Oviedo, G. et al (2000), Indigenous and Traditional Peoples of the World and Ecoregion Conservation: An Integrated Approach to Conserving the World's Biological and Cultural Diversity, pp.20-24 <https://terralingua.org/shop/indigenous-and-traditional-peoples-of-the-world-and-ecoregion-conservation/>

<sup>17</sup> Whilst most SGP projects are multi-focal area in nature, grantees are asked to report on one major focal area for global reporting purposes.

The range of SGP projects that have involved Indigenous Peoples have included: (i) supporting Indigenous Peoples to conserve, sustainably use, and benefit from biodiversity through enhanced territorial governance; (ii) improving land and resource security; (iii) strengthening Indigenous Peoples' resilience to the impacts of climate change; (iv) protecting traditional knowledge by strengthening, documenting, and knowledge sharing on cultures and practices; and (v) influencing local and national policy in their favour.

#### Box 1. SGP Brazil: support to networks of traditional healers in the *cerrado*

Located on the plateaus of Brazil's central high plains, the *cerrado* is a vast tropical savannah that spans the states of Goiás, Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso, Tocantins and Maranhão. The *cerrado* is the world's most biologically rich savannah, home to more than 10,000 species of plants, almost half of which are endemic to the biome. Despite its high level of biodiversity, the *cerrado* remains one of the least protected savannahs in the world. Until the 1980s, the *cerrado*'s main inhabitants have been Indigenous Peoples and small-scale farmers.

In the 1960s, the expansion of large-scale commercial agriculture across the *cerrado* cleared large swaths of forests, threatening the livelihoods and traditions of the Indigenous Peoples and local communities who rely on the natural resources of the region for their daily needs. One group of people that did not take the *cerrado*'s biodiversity for granted were the *raizeiras* (traditional folk healers) who use the region's medicinal plants to prepare home remedies for a variety of ailments and diseases. *Raizeiras*' traditional knowledge is passed down from generation to generation, and holds detailed knowledge of local natural resources and techniques for plant collection. The traditional ethos of the *raizeiras* is to respond to the health needs of their communities, accepting small payments or products in exchange, and frequently providing their services free of charge.

The Pacari Network, a civil-society network, was established in 1999 to preserve the biodiversity of the *cerrado* by promoting the legitimacy of the traditional healers and communities who rely on its natural resources. The network's members, 90 percent of whom are women, include several social and marginalized groups in Brazil, such as Indigenous Peoples, Afro-Brazilians, smallholder farmers, agrarian reform settlers, and coconut palm workers. Pacari Network communities use more than 388 species of medicinal plants, 40 percent of which are native to the *cerrado*. The Pacari Network members collect plants, prepare medicines and care for communities, with some serving more than 1,000 people per month.

Through a series of three small grants from SGP Brazil, the Pacari Network initiated a project on the production of medicinal products and provision of health care to communities in the *cerrado*. Capacity-building activities were initiated on popular harvesting practices and manipulation of medicinal plants and public policy discussions related to medicinal plants, traditional knowledge and conservation of the *cerrado*. With support from the SGP, the Pacari Network brought together 47 community pharmacies that promote traditional medicine and the sustainable use of the *cerrado*'s resources, in 10 regions. To be acknowledged by the network, community pharmacies need to go through more than 200 hours of training based on the set of standards known as the Self-Regulation of Traditional Medicine, and comprised of three major safety principles for ensuring: sustainable harvesting; best practices in sanitation; and quality control in the manufacturing process of artisanal products. Throughout the systematization process, the traditional ethos and cultural heritage of the *raizeiras* was maintained. As a result, the pharmacies function as self-sustaining businesses, generating jobs and income for more than 120 women across the network. Their work benefits an average of 7,300 individuals per month through community healthcare and provision of traditional medicinal herbal remedies.



With respect to mitigating and adapting to climate change, the international community has long recognized the importance of preserving the remaining natural forests, home to many of the world's Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples' traditional natural resource management systems and traditional knowledge have also been recognized as an important source of resilience and adaptation by the recent 5<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),<sup>18</sup> a number of UNFCCC COP decisions, including the Paris Accord, Cancun and Warsaw decisions; the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples Issues; as well as most of the UN agencies that have established Indigenous Peoples policies.

Conservative estimates suggest that 20 percent of the above-ground carbon stored in the world's tropical forests is found in territories claimed by the Indigenous Peoples of Mesoamerica, Amazonia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Indonesia. However, only a fraction of the lands claimed by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in these regions is legally recognized by national governments as community-owned or managed.<sup>19</sup> As a contribution to these multi-lateral frameworks, SGP has played an important role in assisting Indigenous Peoples to protect and safeguard these forests, grazing areas, and prevent changes in land use and land cover, reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

### Box 2. SGP Peru: floating solar panels to irrigate high-altitude soils

In Peru's Ocuvi district of Puno, the Chullpia Lagoon is a dominant geographical feature. It encompasses almost 5,000 hectares and sits at an elevation of 4,000 meters where the air is thin, and nights are chilly. Like around 2 million Peruvians, the Indigenous communities inhabiting the Chullpia Lagoon area live without electricity. Additionally, they are subject to the ravages of climate change with more unpredictable rainstorms, frosts and drought. Water insecurity is prevalent in the area. Reliable irrigation is vital to this region, it guarantees fertile soils which are used to graze alpacas, llamas and vicuñas.



In this context, SGP Peru has provided support to Indigenous communities in building floating solar panels. The concept was built on the idea of Juansergio Castro, a 28-year old Indigenous community member who says *“Chullpia is like our mother because she is our source of life. If we didn't have her, we wouldn't be here. She allows us to keep living and working”*. Upon graduating from the Agricultural Sciences at Altiplano university, Castro decided to invent a method to take water from the lagoon and use it to irrigate nearby pastures. After several months of dedicated work, the Chullpia community has pulled off a first; they developed 34 floating solar panels attached to a metal-and-rubber structure that travels the lagoon daily, capturing the sun's rays. The solar panels power a pump that fills up 11 water reservoirs across Chullpia and the water is then used to irrigate nearby pastures.

An important component of the success of this project is based on combining ancestral knowledge that has been safeguarded by the communities with a 21st century technology. Today, the pastures are green even in dry seasons, the soil is enriched, and the alpacas produce better quality fiber, all of which leads to a better life for residents. Not only does this contribute to greenhouse gas reduction, but it also satisfies the energy needs for remote indigenous communities which lack these facilities because of high costs of central grid electricity transmission and lack of infrastructure.

<sup>18</sup> Weathering Uncertainty: Traditional Knowledge for Climate Change Assessment and Adaptation' (2012) Paris, UNESCO, UNU, UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme (contribution to IPCC AR5).

<sup>19</sup> FAO (2015) Achieving Scale: The Forest and Farm Facility's Work Plan: Annual Steering Committee Meeting February 19–20, 2015. FAO Rome.



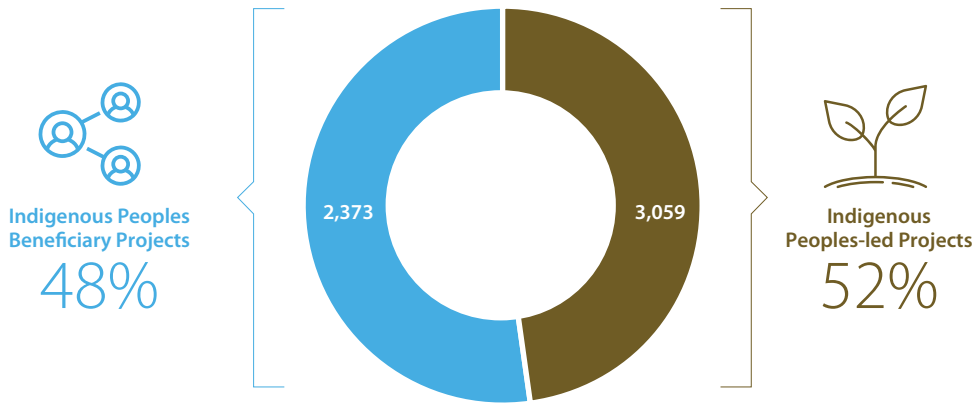
SGP CAMEROON

Due to their dependence upon and close relationship with the environment and its resources, for many Indigenous Peoples, climate change is more than an environmental issue but rather a matter of severe socioeconomic and cultural impacts. SGP engagement with Indigenous Peoples has included numerous partnerships with respect to providing appropriate forms of clean renewable energy technologies.

### Type of Projects

Out of the 5,832 Indigenous Peoples’ projects supported by SGP during the period of the analysis, 52 percent were led by Indigenous Peoples themselves, while the remaining 48 percent were managed by NGOs or intermediary partners to benefit Indigenous Peoples (see Figure 4).

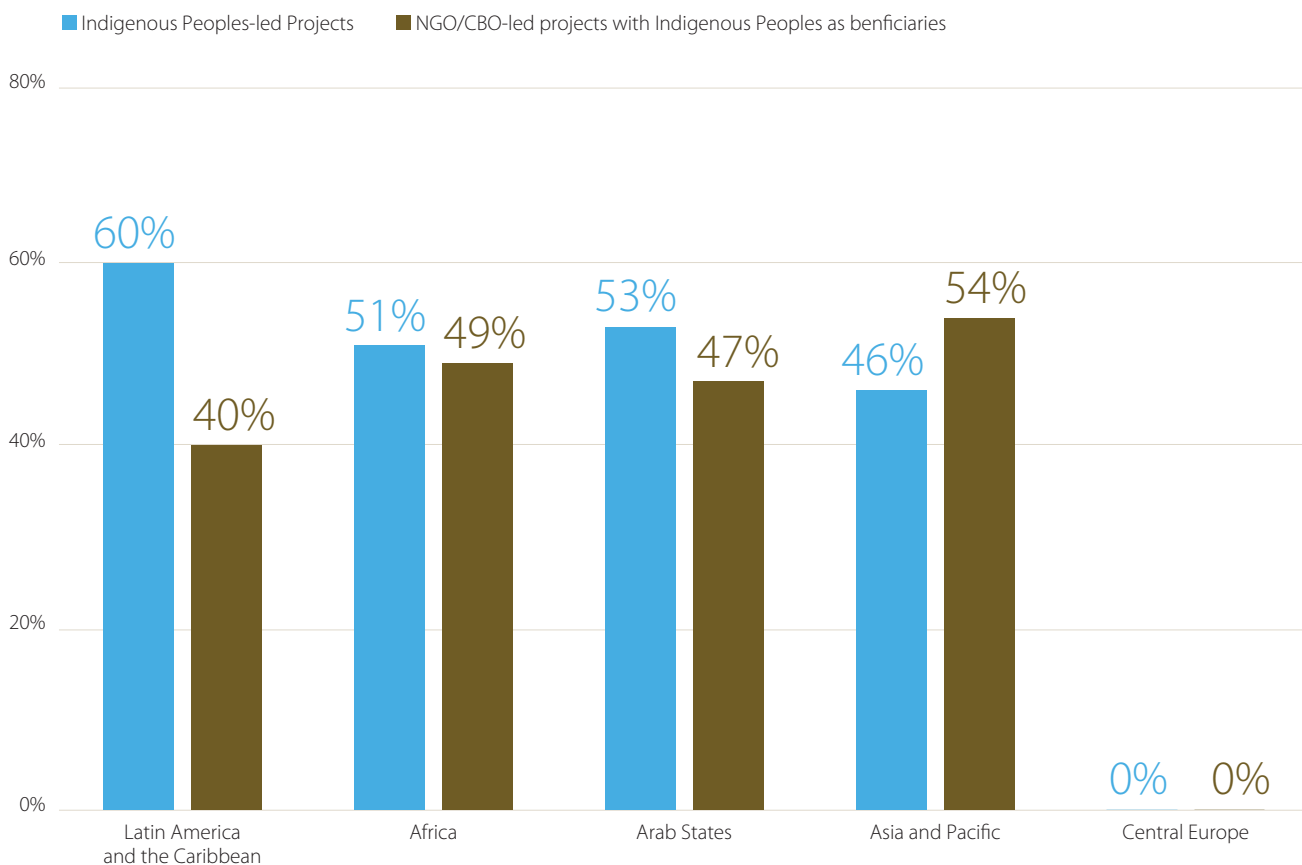
**Figure 4: SGP Indigenous Peoples-led v. Indigenous Peoples Beneficiary Projects 1992-2018**





At the regional level, as presented in Figure 5, in Latin America and the Caribbean 60 percent of the Indigenous projects have been led by Indigenous Peoples, while in the Arab States and Africa, Indigenous Peoples-led projects account for 53 and 51 percent, respectively. In the Asia and Pacific region, Indigenous Peoples-led projects were less than half of the Indigenous Peoples' project portfolio but remain significant at 46 percent. There were no Indigenous Peoples projects identified in the Central Europe region.

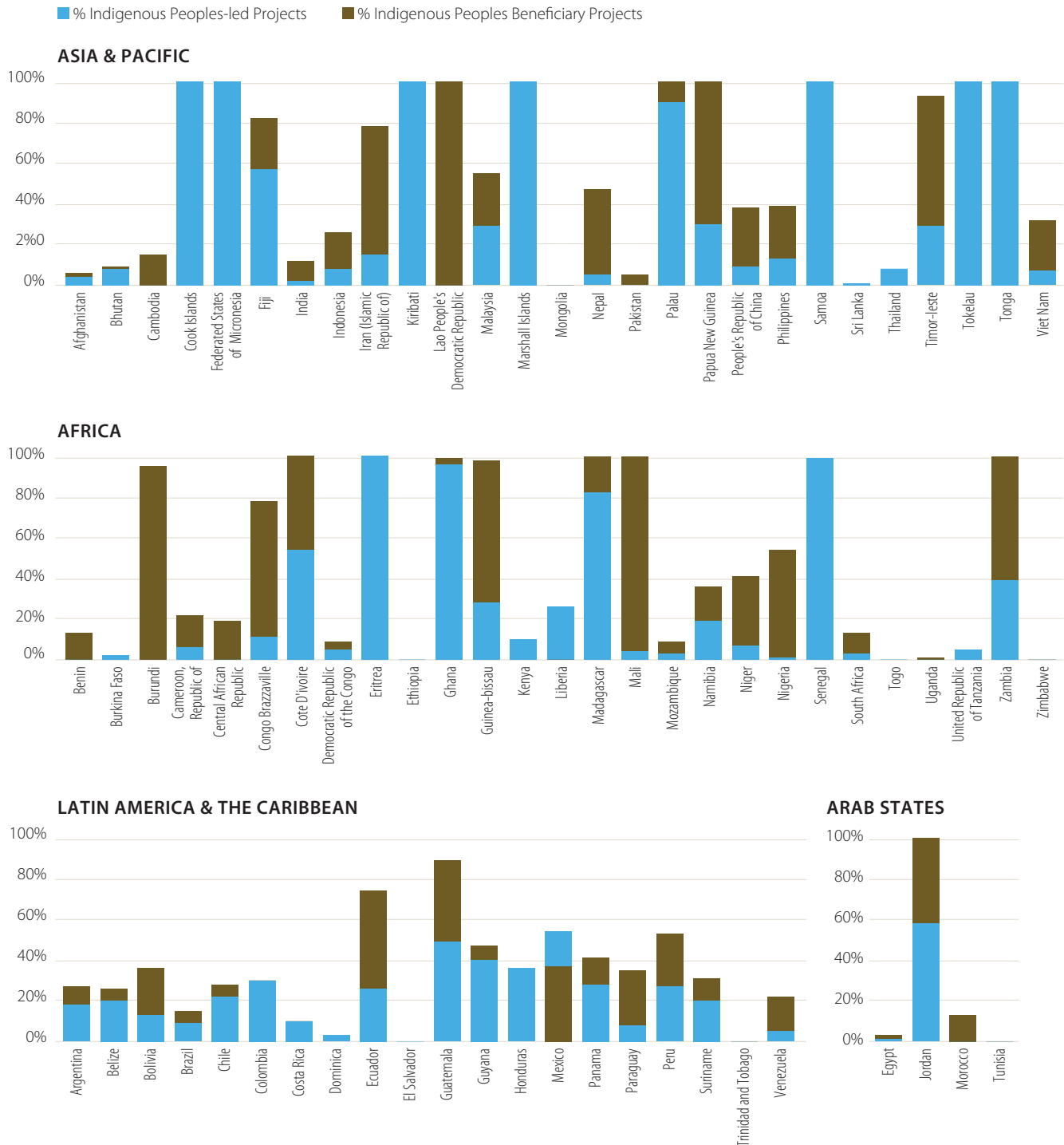
**Figure 5: Regional view: SGP Indigenous Peoples-led v. Indigenous Peoples Beneficiary Projects 1992-2018**



Sources: SGP Project Database; SGP Country Programme staff and partners.

A country-by-country assessment revealed that all regions have a wide range of Indigenous Peoples' project management ratios, and such ratios can largely deviate from the regional and global level averages. This is illustrated in Figure 6.

**Figure 6: SGP Indigenous Peoples' project portfolio by country (1992-2018)**



Sources: SGP Project Database; SGP Country Programme staff and partners.  
Only SGP Countries with Indigenous Peoples within its borders and who responded to the survey are included.

In the interviews held with SGP country staff, stakeholders and Indigenous Peoples, the respondents indicated that three main factors impact the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to manage their own projects: (a) the capacity to implement projects according to SGP reporting standards; (b) the interest and availability of technical volunteers and partners to work with Indigenous Peoples; and (c) the level of policy recognition and financial barriers for Indigenous Peoples to legally register to receive donor funds.

## Grant-size of projects

SGP project grant sizes awarded to Indigenous Peoples appear to follow the same trend as the overall SGP project grant award sizes. On average, 54 percent of all project grants awarded by SGP Country Programmes were more than \$25,000, and 46 percent were less than \$25,000, with an average grant award size of \$27,439. Similarly, 54 percent of all project grants involving Indigenous Peoples were more than \$25,000, and 46 percent were less than \$25,000, with an average grant award size that was slightly larger at \$27,945.

A country-by-country assessment revealed that projects led by Indigenous Peoples and their organizations have an average grant award size of \$26,288 whilst NGO/intermediary-managed Indigenous Peoples projects (with Indigenous Peoples as beneficiaries) have an average grant award size of \$29,772. Since SGP follows a demand-driven approach, this implies that average grant award size sought by Indigenous Peoples and their organizations are slightly smaller, approximately 12 percent smaller on average as compared to those implemented by NGOs/ intermediaries (see Table 3).

**Table 3: SGP Project Award Sizes (1992-2018)**

	<25K USD	>25K USD	AVERAGE GRANT AWARD SIZE
<b>Total project grants*</b>	46%	54%	\$ 27,439
<b>Total Indigenous People project grants</b>	46%	54%	\$ 27,945
<b>Indigenous People -led project grants</b>	50%	50%	\$ 26,288
<b>Indigenous People beneficiary project grants</b>	41%	59%	\$ 29,772

\* Only SGP Countries with Indigenous Peoples within its borders and that responded to the survey are included.

Interviews with SGP staff and Indigenous Peoples indicate that at the country and global level, much has been done to pro-actively and deliberately increase SGP's work with Indigenous Peoples. For example, several interviewees noted the positive impact of the Global Support Initiative for Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCA GSI) (see Chapter 4) in expanding funding opportunities for Indigenous Peoples, as well as positive policy outcomes and partnership building associated with the ICCA initiative and the relevant CBD Aichi Targets.

Several countries have adopted successful pro-active strategies to facilitate Indigenous Peoples' projects in their respective country portfolios. For example, building strong partnerships with national-level Indigenous Peoples' networks has proven to be a successful strategy for numerous country programmes. The partnerships have been helpful in both raising awareness amongst Indigenous Peoples about SGP project opportunities, and in providing technical support to facilitate project proposals, resource mobilization and project reporting. Many SGP country programmes have developed specific templates to guide Indigenous Peoples in proposal development, and have leveraged the volunteer technical expertise of larger NGOs to facilitate Indigenous Peoples-led projects.





SGP PERU

Alongside leveraging technical expertise, SGP country programmes are also coordinating strategic financial partnerships with local governments, NGOs and the private sector. This enables them to award more grants with their existing SGP funding, and allows the country programme to request less co-financing at the grantee level. SGP National Steering Committees have also found that the partnership-based approach creates results that are more sustainable, builds bridges, and creates trust across institutions. Numerous SGP country teams have also reported that multi-stakeholder partnerships raise the visibility of Indigenous Peoples and help to create positive perceptions among governments and decision-makers about the contributions of Indigenous Peoples to national development efforts.

The SGP OP6 Indigenous Peoples Fellowship programme (see Chapter 3) has been another strategy that aims to develop the capacity of Indigenous leaders by supporting their advocacy work on global environmental and sustainable development issues at national, regional and global levels. Several country programmes noted their hope that their Indigenous Peoples Fellows, as members of the programme are called, would strengthen SGP's relationship with remote Indigenous Peoples, improve Indigenous Peoples' access to SGP grants, strengthen policies in support of Indigenous Peoples' rights, and strengthen national Indigenous networks.

# Evolution of SGP's engagement with Indigenous Peoples

## SGP grant-making processes and decentralized governance

Since the Pilot Phase in 1992, the SGP was designed to be a decentralized and country-driven programme, catering to different contexts and realities, with a view to maximizing national as well as grass-roots community ownership. The majority of SGP country programmes are staffed by a locally recruited national coordinator and programme assistant, who are together responsible for managing programme implementation, ensuring that SGP grants meet the criteria of the GEF and other contributing donors. The national coordinator also serves as the secretary to the National Steering Committee (NSC), which is composed of volunteers.

The NSC is the backbone of the SGP in terms of programme governance and strategic directions. The NSC must have a non-governmental majority drawn from a cross-section of civil society organizations, academia, donors, Indigenous networks, media and the private sector, together with institutional representatives from the government and UNDP. The NSC is responsible for shaping the Country Programme Strategy (CPS) and calls for proposals, and approves SGP grant proposals in line with the CPS target outcomes. The NSC also provides technical advice, undertakes a limited number of monitoring and evaluation visits, and helps to share and replicate successful SGP projects and practices at national and regional levels.

The SGP Country Programme Management Team (CPMT) provides oversight to SGP's decentralized network of country programmes – including a designated Indigenous Peoples focal point at the global level. In line with the norms and guidelines of the UN system and the GEF, all SGP country programming is also required to adhere to: (a) the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007); (b) GEF Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (2012); (c) UNDP's Social and Environmental Safeguards Policy (2019); and (d) GEF's Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards (2018). As a GEF Corporate Programme, the SGP also regularly assists the GEF Secretariat and UNDP in carrying out consultations with civil society and Indigenous Peoples, and in reviewing the relevant policy frameworks and operational procedures.

## Evolution of SGP's approach in engaging with Indigenous Peoples

In 2004, during its third operational phase (OP3), SGP updated its guidance to encourage the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples throughout its programming and strategic planning. Following a global review of good practices shared with the CPMT by SGP country teams, the recommended procedures included: (a) appointing an Indigenous Peoples focal point to serve on the NSC;<sup>20</sup> (b) revised guidance on alternative project proposal formats (i.e. participatory video, photovoice, or *almanarios*, a hybrid format based on combining the Spanish words for almanac and calendar) so as to respect and validate the oral traditions of Indigenous Peoples; and (c) strengthening the knowledge and capacity of civil society organizations acting as intermediaries in partnering with Indigenous Peoples.

<sup>20</sup> The Indigenous Peoples focal point in the NSC may be an Indigenous Peoples' representative, or a non-Indigenous person with relevant expertise. As noted by the 2017 GEF IEO Evaluation and 2019 review, approx. 30 countries have included an Indigenous Peoples representative to serve on the NSC, and assist in building partnerships at the national level.



The United Nations Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) was established in 2000 as a high-level advisory body to the UN Economic and Social Council, with a mandate to deal with issues related to Indigenous Peoples' economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights. Shortly after its creation, the SGP became an active and regular participant in the UNPFII (see Table 4). For example, at the sixth session of the UNPFII (in 2007), the SGP shared its updated programming processes to promote alternative proposal formats to be developed by Indigenous Peoples themselves, in lieu of written project proposals.

In 2008, the UNPFII recommended that the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) consider replicating a number of elements of SGP's pioneering experience to support oral cultures through techniques such as participatory video, as well as grant-making through National Steering Committees. The UNDG went on to publish its 'Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues' to assist and direct UN Country Teams integrate Indigenous Peoples' issues into country policies, processes for operational activities and programmes. Referring to the SGP, the UNDG observes that *"the presence of indigenous representatives in a multi-stakeholder group in which no stakeholder is overrepresented and which is chaired by a UN official has been considered a good example of achieving meaningful and direct indigenous participation in decision-making at programme level. For example, see participatory video produced by SGP<sup>21</sup>, the UNIPACK concept in Kenya in connection with GEF SGP National Steering Committees."*<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> The 'Insights into Participatory Video – A Handbook for the Field', co-sponsored by GEF SGP, UNDP Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Division and the HURIST programme, can be downloaded here: <https://sgp.undp.org/resources-155/our-stories/184-insights-into-participatory-video-a-handbook-for-the-field.html>

<sup>22</sup> United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) (2008), *Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues*; p. 24, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/UNDGGuidelines.pdf>

**Table 4: UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) – SGP highlights**

<b>UNPFII 2004</b>	<p>Making the <b>Millennium Ecosystem Assessment</b> work for Indigenous Peoples': consultation process with Indigenous Peoples to improve and expand its SGP grant-making procedures with Indigenous Peoples, including modalities for direct access. Sharing of experiences on Indigenous Peoples' engagement with the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment organised with the World Resources Institute (WRI) on <i>'Bridging Scales and Epistemologies; Linking local knowledge with global science in multi-scale assessments.'</i></p>	
<b>UNPFII 2005</b>	<p>Sharing experiences of SGP Guatemala in developing the <b>almanario (a hybrid of almanaque [almanac] and calendario [calendar]) flip-chart proposal and monitoring methodology</b> for project implementation, combined with the encouragement of Indigenous female promoters in assisting other Indigenous women to develop proposals for submission to funding from the SGP using Indigenous languages.</p>	
<b>UNPFII 2006</b>	<p>Launch by the Chair of the UNPFII on the rights of indigenous peoples of <b>'Insights into Participatory Video: a handbook for the field'</b> as a practical guide to running participatory video projects that hand over control to Indigenous communities from project conception through to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The participatory video handbook was commissioned by the SGP together with the UNDP Civil Society Organization division and Human Rights Strengthening Programme. A selection of video films made by local communities and a training film were included with an accompanying CD-ROM.</p>	
<b>UNPFII 2007</b>	<p>Promotion of eco-tourism by Indigenous enterprises (<b>Community Tours Sian Ka'an</b>, Yucatan peninsula, Mexico) through landscape-based approaches around World Heritage Sites: the <b>Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation (COMPACT)</b> programme in partnership with UNESCO, RARE, and the CBD Secretariat.</p>	
<b>UNPFII 2008</b>	<p>Collaboration with Conservation International, Tribal Link Foundation, Government of Germany, IAITPF, and Land is Life for a workshop at the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations entitled <b>'Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change: Mobilizing Collaborative Action'</b>. Panel discussion focused on <b>'REDD: Opportunities and Challenges'</b> for Indigenous Peoples within the context of the UNFCCC climate change negotiations. Launch of Participatory Video collaboration with dot-Sub translation platform for translation of video testimonies of Indigenous Peoples in different languages.</p>	
<b>UNPFII 2009</b>	<p>One-day consultation workshop held on the topic of <b>Indigenous Peoples and Community Areas (ICCAs)</b> with feedback into a UNPFII side event to further the understanding and analysis of ICCAs from the perspective of enhancing the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples. The proposed focus on ICCAs was suggested not to be seen in isolation in relation to biodiversity conservation, but rather as one of various mechanisms available to foster rights-based approaches, and contribute to mitigation and adaptation efforts in response to climate change. Results shared during the 2nd Session of the <b>UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</b>.</p>	
<b>UNPFII 2011</b>	<p>Engagement with the philanthropic sector and International Funders of Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) on the relevance of traditional knowledge towards <b>community-based adaptation (CBA)</b> to climate change, including SGP partnership with the Government of Australia in supporting small grants for CBA in the Asia-Mekong region and Small Island Developing States.</p>	
<b>UNPFII 2012</b>	<p>SGP support provided to the GEF Secretariat and Task Force on Indigenous Peoples in organizing consultations to develop and finalise its new <b>GEF Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples</b> (2012).</p>	
<b>UNPFII 2013</b>	<p>Launch of SGP partnership with the UN-REDD programme and Government of Norway on <b>Community-Based REDD+ (CBR+)</b> in six pilot countries: grants to Indigenous Peoples and local communities to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, improve the definition of land rights, explore mechanisms for benefit sharing, and advance the implementation of safeguards for REDD+.</p>	
<b>UNPFII 2015-18</b>	<p>Consultations organized on the characteristics of an SGP higher-level capacity building programme for Indigenous Peoples, followed by the launch of the SGP <b>OP6 Indigenous Peoples Fellowship Initiative</b>. Four global SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellows and seven national SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellows were selected from 2016-2019.</p>	



### Landscape-level small grants approaches: protected areas

Through a partnership of nearly 15 years between the SGP and the UN Foundation (UNF), the Community Management of Protected Areas for Conservation (COMPACT) initiative pioneered a landscape-level small grants model for promoting the engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the conservation and governance of UNESCO-designated World Heritage Sites (WHSs). The initiative began its work in a core group of eight WHS spanning nine countries in Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa (2001-2013), with a focus on the engagement of Indigenous Peoples in many of the participating protected areas.

Over a 13-year period from 2001-2013, COMPACT was able to demonstrate that by adopting a conceptual model planning framework, baseline and site strategy, community-based initiatives had the potential to greatly increase the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in the co-management of globally significant protected areas. The programme supported over 1 million beneficiaries and more than 400 small grants in the target WHSs. The collaboration resulted in a lessons-learned publication and a UNESCO World Heritage COMPACT methodology paper on community engagement.<sup>23</sup>

From 2013 to 2019, the initiative refocused effort towards a growing suite of new partners including the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (as the advisory body for the evaluation of World Heritage nominations, including for the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples) to foster replication of the approach in engaging Indigenous Peoples and local communities in other WHSs. This led to an uptake of the COMPACT model by several new WHSs including in transboundary areas such as: (a) Simien National Park, Ethiopia; (b) Kaeng Krachan National Park, Thailand; (c) Okavango Delta, Botswana-Namibia-Angola; (d) Maloti-Drakensberg, South Africa-Lesotho; (e) Tri-National Sangha, Central Africa Republic-Cameroon-Republic of Congo; and (f) Parc W, Niger-Benin.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> These included the *Garifuna* people in the Belize Barrier Reef, Belize; *Masai* in Mt. Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, and Mt. Kenya; *Mayan* peoples in Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, Mexico; *Batak* living within the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Philippines; and the *Kalinago* (carib) peoples in the buffer zone of the Morne Trois Pitons, Dominica.

<sup>24</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/40/> Available in English, French, Spanish and Thai languages.

# SGP operational tools in partnering with Indigenous Peoples

As noted in Chapter 2, a founding principle of SGP's engagement with Indigenous Peoples has been the need for flexibility to adjust administrative procedures wherever possible to the needs and realities of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including through the use of national, local and Indigenous languages. A number of operational examples are presented below, where different SGP country programmes have independently developed their own methodologies, formats and tools to encourage and facilitate participation by Indigenous Peoples.

## Almanario approach with Indigenous women

From OP1 until OP4, the SGP Guatemala country programme took a strategic decision to concentrate its resources on the south-western corner of the country owing to anthropic pressures on international waterbodies, globally significant biodiversity, and high levels of poverty. The NSC noted that traditional funding sources had hitherto not reached the remote Indigenous Mayan peoples living in the south-west due to the mountainous terrain, educational barriers and high levels of ethnic and linguistic diversity (*k'iché, mam, cakchiquel, sipakapense and tzutuhil* Mayan groups). The SGP country programme further observed that national NGOs tended to follow their own agendas whilst working with Indigenous Peoples, limiting the opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to express their own development needs and environmental concerns.

In this context, the SGP Guatemala Country Programme Strategy was focused on priority populations (Indigenous Peoples and women's groups) based on national rankings under the UNDP's Human Development Index. Specific procedures and formats were developed to facilitate access for these target groups, including training materials in the form of *almanario* flip-charts, a combination of the Spanish words *almanaque* (almanac) and *calendario* (calendar).<sup>25</sup> In addition, the SGP developed a network of voluntary Indigenous promoters versed in the participatory diagnostics of environmental community problems. These female promoters were trained in gender-based approaches, techniques to record in-kind project co-financing, project planning and design, budget development, monitoring and evaluation. Once trained, the promoters returned to their respective Indigenous Peoples territories to replicate the methodology to generate more concepts from remote Indigenous Peoples communities eligible for SGP funding. Based on its empowering orientation and emphasis on reducing gender inequalities, the *almanario* was presented by Indigenous leader Clara Colop at the UNPFII in New York, and replicated by other SGP countries at the global level.



SGP GUATEMALA



SGP GUATEMALA

<sup>25</sup> While the *almanario* functioned as a proposal format for SGP, it also worked as a planning and monitoring tool to: (i) plan activities, including capacity-building training sessions; (ii) list the materials needed; (iii) detail the associated cost and budgets; (iv) describe the roles and responsibilities for each of the activities proposed; and (v) describe knowledge-sharing mechanisms.

## Use of participatory video for grant proposals

SGP has adopted a number of ways to encourage the submission of concepts for funding from vulnerable and remote populations prior to the submission of full proposal for review by the NSC. A common way to do this is by using planning grants (typically around \$2,000), which can be used to conduct community consultations, as well as to translate ideas and concepts from Indigenous and vernacular linguistic forms into the national language.

In keeping with the SGP principle of flexibility, the majority of country programmes identify their own culturally sensitive entry points to increase programming with Indigenous Peoples and other vulnerable populations. In addition to planning grants, many SGP country programmes have adjusted the proposal formats to cater for vernacular and oral cultures, including through the use of participatory-video and photovoice formats. One of the first SGP countries to innovate and experiment with participatory-video proposals was Indonesia in 2004 (see Box 3).

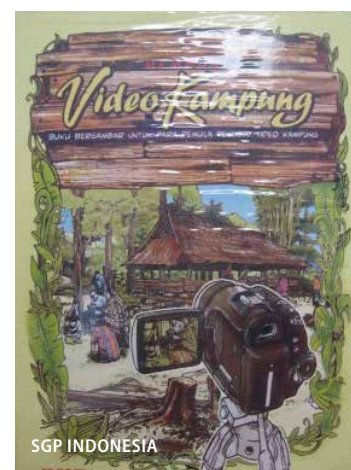
### Box 3. SGP Indonesia: experimentation with participatory video

Acknowledging that oral and spoken formats would likely be culturally more appropriate for the *Orang Rimba* Indigenous people of Sumatra, in 2004 the SGP Indonesia NSC approved a planning grant for the development of a project proposal based on a concept submitted in video format. Living adjacent to the *Bukit Dua Belas* National Park, the *Orang Rimba* people requested support for the protection of their forest lands from illegal loggers and oil palm companies. Working with an anthropologist and a group of film makers selected by the community as trusted partners, the participatory-video project concept followed



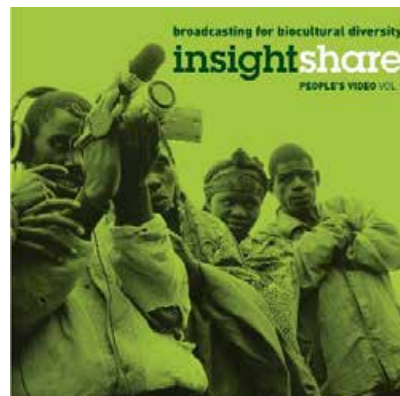
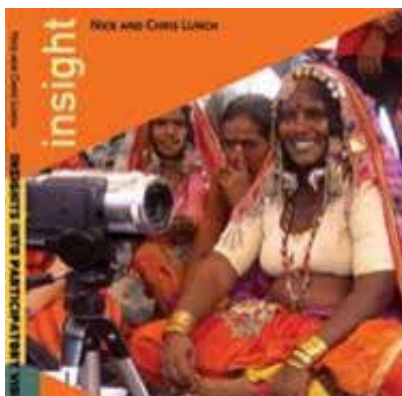
the principle of free prior and informed consent, to ensure the full control of the *Orang Rimba* over the project. The participatory-video project proposal was later also found to be a useful tool for advocacy and stimulating policy dialogue with the protected area and forest authorities with respect to Indigenous Peoples rights.

In 2008, SGP Indonesia went on to prepare a national participatory-video training guide (*Video Kampung*) and series of participatory-video films made by communities affected by the Porong mud-flow disaster in East Java, for screening in Jakarta. The films were made during a regional participatory-video training carried out with assistance from the NGO InsightShare, with funds mobilized at the global level from the UNDP Global Human Rights Strengthening Programme (HURIST).<sup>26</sup> The screening was attended by high-level government officials, representatives from the duty-bearer (the Lapindo gas company), and a private station (Metro TV), who welcomed the submission of the participatory-video film. Metro TV acknowledged a growing interest in community journalism in SE Asia, and noted the strong preference in many communities towards watching rather than reading information materials relating to community interest and priorities. The participatory-video films demonstrated a wide potential application of the technique as a tool to apply a human rights-based approach for planning during ecological and humanitarian disasters.



<sup>26</sup> The training brought together around 15 experienced community video workers from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines with hands-on experience of participatory-video methodology in order to develop a regional network of practitioners.

Building on the positive experience with participatory video in Indonesia, SGP continued to expand and commission a number of resources on participatory video at the global level through a series of handbooks and training materials focusing on: participatory-video workshop methodologies; storyboard preparation techniques; games and exercises; technical specifications; involvement of different community perspectives (youth, women, elders); steps to achieve free prior and informed consent; and non-violent forms of communication on sensitive subjects with respect to human rights.<sup>27</sup>



In Africa, SGP extended the collaboration with HURIST to support a series of participatory-video training events with Indigenous Peoples on rights-based approaches in Cameroon and Uganda. In Cameroon, an Indigenous organization representing *baka* hunter-gatherers (Okani) partnered with the SGP to prepare a training participatory-video workshop in Mabam, a village close to the National Park of Nki. The participatory-video workshop focused on the Baka experience of climate change and protected areas, and was attended by around 15 national Indigenous participants from across the country. The participatory-video film was shared widely with policy-makers and human rights advisors at the national and sub-regional levels, as well as internationally through the UNDP YouTube channel and UNPFII.



<sup>27</sup> Many of the resource materials on participatory video were produced with support from the NGO InsightShare. The first handbook, titled *Insights into Participatory Video*, has been translated into seven languages, and is available from: <https://insightshare.org/resources/insights-into-participatory-video-a-handbook-for-the-field/> A second Toolkit on the subject of participatory video and human rights was also produced and is available from: <https://insightshare.org/resources/rights-based-approach-to-participatory-video/>



Based on the effectiveness of the method, the UNDP communications department expressed interest in developing a broader discussion on how to promote participatory video across UNDP programming. This interest led to a diversification of the focus of the participatory video to work towards other areas including community-based adaptation (CBA) to climate change, resilience and traditional ecological knowledge. A workshop on participatory video and CBA was held in Samoa, with further participatory-video trainings on CBA and traditional knowledge held in Kazakhstan and Niger.



SGP subsequently partnered with the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee, the Global Diversity Foundation and The Christensen Fund to conduct a workshop titled Plants, Livelihoods and Community Conservation, including the use of innovative media, held in Botswana in 2009. A video from the workshop, which deals with *San* and *Nama* Indigenous Peoples' efforts to retain traditional knowledge of plants and their benefits, fight plant poaching, and conserve biodiversity, was developed and can be viewed here.<sup>28</sup>



In Uganda, a participatory-video training was also organized with the *batwa* Indigenous Peoples living near to the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, where they had been historically excluded by the protected area from their ancestral areas for the collection of medicinal plants and non-timber forest products. The workshop resulted in a series of participatory-video films, as well as community hearings with decision-makers and protected area authorities, captured through a series of photo-cartoon storyboards (see below). On the basis of the films, the Uganda NSC approved a project to create a *batwa* Eco-Cultural Resource Centre to assist the *batwa* to serve as guides in telling the story of the national park to tourists and visitors.



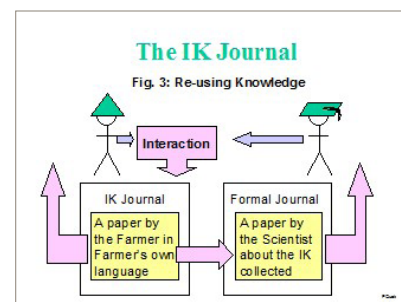
A large number of screenings and discussions on the topic of participatory video and rights-based applications of the technique to work with Indigenous Peoples were also held: (i) at the Global Indigenous Summit on Climate Change (April 2009, Alaska); (ii) as film clips from Indigenous communities on climate change were shown at the Environmental Grant-Makers retreat (Sept 2009); and (iii) as part of the Conversations With the Earth initiative at the UNFCCC COP15 meeting in Copenhagen (December 2009).

## Strengthening of traditional knowledge

For many local communities and Indigenous Peoples, the preservation of their traditional knowledge is essential to safeguard not only their culture, but also their environment and livelihoods. As demonstrated by the collection of wild and managed plants, natural resources provide a form of ecological social security that is vital to Indigenous Peoples and the rural poor. An intrinsic link exists between the protection and transmission of traditional knowledge, as a constantly evolving body of practical ecological experience, the physical environment, and the in-situ conservation of genetic resources.

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.globaldiversityfund.net/>

While considering traditional knowledge, many SGP country programmes had noticed that NGOs and intermediary groups often lacked adequate methods to recognize the key contribution of Indigenous Peoples and farmers to the process of bioprospecting and research. Over the course of multiple Operational Phases, numerous SGP country programmes have developed a suite of tools to explore the relationship between formal and informal knowledge sectors, as well as to develop techniques to recognize and valorize this traditional knowledge. One early example of such a tool was the Indigenous Knowledge (IK) Journal, developed by the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (now known as Bioversity International) in partnership with SGP Malaysia in 2005. The IK Journal was designed as a defensive protection measure to safeguard the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples in Malaysia, several years ahead of the coming into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) in 2010.



#### Box 4. SGP Morocco: protecting traditional knowledge in the High Atlas Mountains

Located in Morocco's high Atlas Mountains, the *agdal* (traditional pasture grazing area) of Oukaimeden is a natural and cultural heritage site and repository of history. For generations, the *agdal* has been preserved by the Berber semi-nomadic tribes, whereby the area is closed for five months a year to allow the land and grazing area to regenerate. The *agdal* is a key source of community livelihoods and its governance system is anchored in the cultural and spiritual traditions of Berber pastoralists.



At the same time, the *agdal* of Oukaimeden is increasingly attracting Morocco's nascent ski industry, with private sector developers closing in on the area. As a result, there has been a decline in the use of traditional knowledge and Indigenous conservation measures, with a severe lack of inter-generational transmission, posing a risk of social fragmentation and environmental degradation. Additionally, migration and climate change impacts exacerbate these challenges.

Support from the SGP Morocco country programme focused on self-strengthening and revitalizing the Berber communities' inter-generational transmission of traditional knowledge. The main components of the SGP project included: (i) participatory engagement in reinforcing traditional knowledge and practices, with a major focus on younger generations; (ii) advocacy and awareness raising on transhumant pastoralism practices to safeguard ecosystems and preserve the cultural heritage; and (iii) protection of traditional knowledge through documentation.

In 2007, the fourth IPCC assessment report acknowledged that Indigenous knowledge is an "invaluable basis for developing adaptation and natural resource management strategies in response to environmental and other forms of change." Consideration of traditional and Indigenous knowledge was also included as a guiding principle for the Cancun Adaptation Framework that was adopted by Parties at the 2010 UNFCCC Conference in Mexico.<sup>29</sup> However, it was also noted that the IPCC process was not accessible to the observations and assessments of Indigenous Peoples, marginalized populations and scientists in developing countries. To address this, the IPCC

<sup>29</sup> Nakashima, D.J., et al, (2011), *Weathering Uncertainty*.

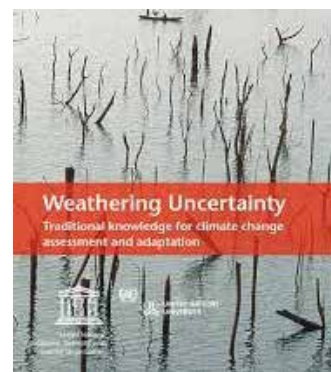
recommended increasing the diversity and number of regional experts, inclusion of grey literature and literature in other languages, and organizing workshops to collect and assess relevant *in situ* observations and scientific data for the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5).

In this context, the SGP partnered with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations University (UNU) to organize an international experts' meeting titled Indigenous Peoples, Marginalized Populations and Climate Change: Vulnerability, Adaptation and Traditional Knowledge, held in July 2011 in Mexico City. More than 50 papers were peer reviewed. Inputs from the conference made substantial contributions to the outcome report titled *Weathering Uncertainty: Traditional Knowledge for Climate Change Assessment and Adaptation*. The report influenced the outline of the IPCC's Working Group II contribution to the AR5, which included local and traditional knowledge together with human security as a distinct topic.

### Indigenous Peoples Fellowship initiative

Over the course of OP6 (2016-2019), the SGP introduced an Indigenous Peoples Fellowship initiative designed to develop higher-level skills of existing and potential Indigenous People leaders to advance the work of their communities, organizations and networks at national, regional and global levels. The initiative was designed in response to a need expressed by Indigenous Peoples during consultations to directly represent themselves in multi-lateral policy settings, including within dialogues pertaining to the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN's 2030 Agenda, and global environmental financing opportunities.<sup>30</sup> The IP Fellowship was designed in consultation with a number GEF agencies, including Conservation International, which has a similar programme; Tribal Link, with experience in providing annual capacity-building of IPs during the UNPFII; and Nia Tero Foundation, with the mission to secure indigenous guardianship of vital ecosystems.

A first cohort of four global SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellows were selected in 2016 through a competitive international process (which received over 500 applications). Two of the Fellows were selected with a focus on biodiversity conservation, and two on climate change (see Table 5). The objective of the Fellowship centred on the individuals' personal engagement with global environmental and sustainable development policy fora, supporting their informed participation in global conferences, trainings and dialogues. Over three years, the four Fellows represented the interests of their communities across a wide range of international policy settings including: (a) the UNFCCC COP22 in Morocco (2016); (b) UNPFII (2016, 2017, 2018); (c) CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES); and (d) the 14<sup>th</sup> COP of the CBD in Sharm el Sheikh in Egypt (2018).



<sup>30</sup> In response to call from Indigenous People networks during the pre-COP21 Indigenous People-government dialogues organized in 21 countries (Sept-Nov 2015), as well as global dialogues held at the UNFCCC COP21 in Paris (Dec 2015).



SGP CHINA

In most cases, the Global Indigenous Peoples Fellows also supported their communities and networks at the national level, engaging closely with SGP national coordinators with respect to grant-making procedures and strategic areas of focus.

A national SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellowship pilot programme was later launched in 2018 to increase SGP's support to Indigenous Peoples in seven target countries in Asia-Pacific, Africa and Latin America.<sup>31</sup> The national SGP Fellowship initiative sought to support a range of skills development, including project monitoring and implementation, uptake of alternative proposal formats by SGP country teams, dialogues on Indigenous youth, and access to climate finance.

The objective of the one-year national Indigenous Peoples Fellowship was to strengthen mid-level skills of Indigenous Peoples for project development, management and implementation to: (a) increase the portfolio of projects by Indigenous Peoples within the SGP; (b) increase appropriate resource flows from donors, development agencies, and governments; and (c) identify modalities for grant-making which are governed with the direct involvement of Indigenous Peoples. The national Fellowship included a practical placement working alongside the SGP country programme in support of national grant-making activities, as well as a regional and/or global skill-building exercise.



As part of the practical placement, the national Indigenous Peoples Fellows have worked with the SGP country programme to engage with representative Indigenous Peoples' networks at the national level; enhance grant-making formats and techniques; and assist with the implementation of at least one SGP-funded project with a specific community. The national Indigenous Peoples Fellows were also encouraged to take part in Indigenous People-government dialogues and platforms at the national level to develop their skills in knowledge exchange and advocacy.

The launch of the national Indigenous Peoples Fellowship initiative took place in coordination between the CPMT and the respective national SGP country programmes. The calls for application were made through social media, SGP website, and other Indigenous and civil society networks. The Indigenous Peoples Fellowship application required an Indigenous community and/or network endorsement. A national selection panel was established made up of representatives from the UNDP, NSC focal point for Indigenous Peoples, civil society and regional Indigenous networks. The final selection was authorized by the Chair of the NSC, UN Resident Representative and CPMT. Each of the national SGP Indigenous Peoples fellows received a stipend of approximately \$20,000.

<sup>31</sup> China, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Argentina, Guatemala, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The participating countries were selected based on their ongoing work on forests under the community-based REDD+ (CBR+), and/or engagement in the Global Support Initiative on Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) – see chapter 4.

**Table 5: SGP global Indigenous Peoples Fellows**

**EDNA  
KAPTOYO**  
(CLIMATE CHANGE)



An Indigenous *Pokot* woman from Kenya, Edna Kaptoyo was a global SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellow (2016–2019) focusing on climate change. She is a social development specialist engaged in multilateral processes that advance the concerns of Indigenous Peoples in Africa. Edna's Indigenous Peoples Fellowship objectives were to: (i) advocate for the recognition of Indigenous women's roles and contribution to sustainable resource management; (ii) strengthen her capacity and knowledge to engage effectively in climate change negotiations and advocacy at national and international levels; and (iii) support community initiatives on climate change adaptation and mitigation in West Pokot County, Kenya.

**EDITH  
BASTIDAS**  
(BIODIVERSITY)



Community leader Edith Bastidas was a global SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellow (2016–2019) focusing on biodiversity conservation. As an Indigenous woman from the *Pastos* community of Nariño in southern Colombia, Edith's Indigenous Peoples Fellowship objective was to ensure the defence and promotion of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the implementation of the CBD Gender Plan on Biodiversity, Aichi Targets, and Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) agreements. Her Indigenous Peoples Fellowship objectives were to: (i) develop the capacity of Latin American Indigenous Peoples, particularly Indigenous women, on the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol to ensure the protection of Indigenous knowledge and its associated genetic resources; and (ii) strengthen her advocacy skills to promote Indigenous concerns internationally and nationally with a particular focus on the ratification by Colombia of the Nagoya Protocol.

**THINGREIPHI  
LUNG HARWO**  
(BIODIVERSITY)



Global biodiversity fellow (2016–2019) Thingreiphi Lung Harwo (Athing) belongs to the *Tangkhu* Naga community in north-east India. She is a member of the Naga Women's Union (made up of 21 Naga tribes in north-east India). Athing's global Indigenous Peoples Fellowship objectives were to: (i) advocate for Indigenous Peoples' rights and environmental protection at the international level; (ii) raise awareness on the value of biodiversity in addressing solutions to poverty reduction, enhancing sustainable development and well-being; (iii) focus on the development of traditional knowledge indicators; (iv) work on organizational strengthening for a Naga women's organization; and (v) work on an Integrated Mountain Initiative project to build a consortium of young tribal researchers to undertake studies on mountain peoples, approaches, and practices to combating climate change in the Indian Himalayas.

**ZAHRA  
OUHSSAIN**  
(CLIMATE CHANGE)



An *Amazigh* from Rissani, Morocco, an oasis in south-east Morocco, Zahra Ouhssain was a global SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellow (2016–2019) on climate change. She is a journalist with the Amazigh national radio, and producer and host of several radio programmes in Amazigh related to language, culture and the environment. Zahra's main objectives with the Indigenous Peoples Fellowship were: to develop the capacity of journalists on the *Amazigh* use of traditional knowledge and practices to adapt to climate change; to produce a documentary on the traditional management of water resources; and encourage exchange among Tunisian and Algerian *Amazigh* groups on community management of oases with the intention to develop a community network in the North African region.

## SGP national Indigenous Peoples Fellows

**BO LIU**



Dr Bo Liu is a lecturer in biology at Minzu University in China. Bo is Mongolian Chinese, born in the autonomous region of Inner Mongolia, and specializes in biodiversity conservation and ethnobotany. As part of his SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellowship, Bo carried out eight trainings with local communities and staff from nature reserves focusing on the identification and conservation of protected species, and plant cultivation. Bo has undertaken field investigations to collect plant specimens and medicinal plants for on-going inventories and has engaged in environmental education activities in elementary schools, in addition to the design of booklets to develop capacity on the prevention of forest fires and on the cultivation of medicinal plants.

**BEN RULI**



Ben Ruli is from the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea. His academic background is in Indigenous environment and development studies with a primary interest in environmental anthropology. Ben's Fellowship objectives (2018–2019) were to: (i) increase the portfolio of projects led by Indigenous Peoples, both within the SGP as well as with other similar international grant-making programmes in PNG; (ii) demonstrate modalities for grant-making that are governed with the direct involvement of Indigenous Peoples; and (iii) develop the capacity and skillset of existing and potential Indigenous People leaders to advance the work of their communities, organizations and networks at national, regional and global levels.

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**JAVIER  
VILLALBA**



Javier Villalba is a *Guarani* from the north-eastern province of Misiones in Argentina where he lives with his community. His community manages 600 hectares of community property and is composed of 158 families, who engage in agricultural production, the breeding of small animals, and the production of yerba mate. As part of his SGP Indigenous Peoples fellowship Javier worked on developing trust between the Indigenous Peoples communities and SGP. He became an integral part of the implementation of the Global Support Initiative for Indigenous Peoples and Community Conserved Areas (ICCA-GSI) in Argentina. He was actively involved with the SGP office organizing workshops in the north-east and north-west of the country, and focused on SGP's outreach with Indigenous communities. Javier participated in the IUCN III Latin American and Caribbean Congress of Protected Areas in Lima in October 2019.

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**EDY  
ALEXANDER  
CANIZ**



Edy Alexander Caniz is an Indigenous Maya *Kiche*, and has been the community authority of the organization of the *Kiche* people of Totonicapán in addition to the representative of the Board of Directors of Assets and Natural Resources of the 48 cantons, a community located in western Guatemala. During his Indigenous Peoples Fellowship (2018-2019) Edy participated in a symposium in Cuba on climate change, ecology and society, and other workshops in Guatemala on environmental management, racism and discrimination. Edy focused his work on the implementation of SGP projects working with the beneficiary communities to monitor their learning. He was actively involved in the implementation of the Global Support Initiative for Indigenous Peoples and Community Conserved Areas (ICCA-GSI) in Guatemala. He developed a community guide on the governance of ICCAs and the inclusion of youth.

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**ALIOU  
MUSTAFA**



Aliou Mustafa is from the *Mbororo-Fulani* pastoralist community of the Northwest Region of Cameroon. He is a solar energy technician and works with the organization Solaire du Cameroon in the Adamawa region of Cameroon to provide electricity and clean drinking water to communities using clean energy technology. Aliou Mustapha concluded his one-year Fellowship in November 2019. As part of his SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellowship, Aliou participated in the Convention on Biodiversity Conference of the Parties meeting in Egypt in November 2018, including in the pre-COP14 Indigenous strategic planning meetings.

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**SERAPHIN  
LONGALA  
ILONGA**



Seraphin Longala Ilonga was born in Boyeka village, in the Province of Equateur in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He is an Indigenous community member. Ilonga studied political science and administration in his home city of Mbandaka. Ilonga was a national SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellow from 2018 to 2019 and carried out his Fellowship from the remote province of Equateur supporting SGP in the identification and implementation of projects in the province. He developed a modality for Indigenous Peoples to prepare oral grant applications, and worked with the project beneficiaries on the use of local natural resources.

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**BARSHA  
LEKHI**



Barsha Lekhi has a Masters in environmental science from Jawaharlal Nehru University, India, and was awarded the Silver Jubilee Scholarship. As part of her SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellowship Barsha undertook a review of projects led by different institutions working with Indigenous Peoples in Nepal to ensure greater information sharing and communication between organizations. She collaborated with SGP Nepal on its overall engagement with Indigenous Peoples in the country, while also developing her skill set in various national and international workshops and trainings. Barsha participated in the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP25) in Madrid in December 2019 and UNDP regional dialogue on Indigenous Youth Social Entrepreneurship in Bangkok in January 2020.

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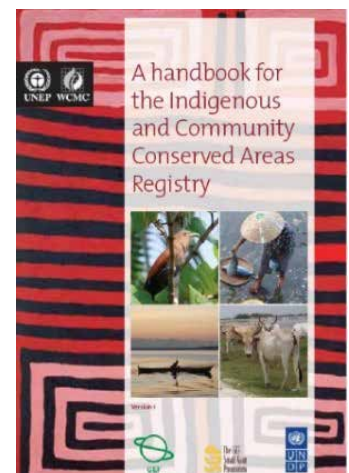
# SGP partnerships with Indigenous Peoples

SGP projects are seldom implemented in isolation, and are usually embedded within networks that extend from the local to national and global levels. With respect to Indigenous Peoples, the SGP has developed a wide number of partnerships with bilateral donors, focused on a range of topics including: (a) Indigenous Peoples and Community Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCAs) with the Government of Germany; (b) community-based adaptation to climate change (CBA) with the Government of Australia; (c) community-based REDD+ (CBR+) with the UN-REDD programme and Government of Norway; and (d) socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS) with the Government of Japan, United Nations University, and CBD Secretariat. Whilst Indigenous Peoples have not been the sole focus of each of these partnerships, support to Indigenous Peoples as rights holders and the valorization of traditional knowledge have been critical elements for many of the projects.

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

In recognition of the critical role played by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in biodiversity conservation,<sup>32</sup> a new category of community-conserved areas was first proposed during the Fifth IUCN World Parks Congress held in Durban in 2003. Following the CBD COP9 held in Bonn, Germany, in 2008 the category subsequently became adopted and widely known as Indigenous Peoples and Community Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCAs) – one of four over-arching governance types of protected areas recognized by the IUCN.<sup>33</sup> Despite these international efforts, many ICCAs have nevertheless continued to struggle to be recognized by governments, and face serious hurdles to their effective and appropriate recognition in national policies and legal systems.

In 2006, the SGP initiated a collaboration with the IUCN Theme on Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA) on the topic of ICCAs, later becoming one of the founding members of the Global ICCA Consortium established during the IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Barcelona in 2008. During OP4 and OP5, the SGP was able to focus a growing proportion of its country-level funding under the biodiversity focal area for the support and recognition of ICCAs. The resources from the GEF were further complemented by funds from UNDP, which allowed the SGP to assist in the capacity building of the ICCA Consortium, the launch of a handbook and toolkit on ICCAs, and in the design and creation of the Global Registry of ICCAs in partnership with the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) which hosts the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA).



<sup>32</sup> Notwithstanding the rapid growth in government-managed PAs since the 1960s, researchers estimate that at least 80 percent of globally significant biodiversity will remain outside of formally gazetted protected areas. See Newsham, A. et al, Conservation and Development (2016), p.214

<sup>33</sup> ICCAs are formally defined by IUCN as: "natural and modified ecosystems including significant biodiversity, ecological services and cultural values voluntarily conserved by indigenous and local communities through customary law or other effective means."



In 2014, given the growing interest and demand for support on ICCAs from stakeholders, the SGP developed the Global ICCA Support Initiative (GSI) with the German Ministry of the Environment (BMU) as part of its International Climate Initiative. The ICCA GSI was designed as a contribution to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Targets relating to increasing the coverage of protected areas (Target 11), improving ecosystems that provide essential services (Target 14), and respecting and protecting traditional knowledge (Target 18). The GSI was structured as a coalition-based programme to strengthen grassroots initiatives in 26 countries through the provision of small grants. The GSI has also channelled support to: (a) the Global ICCA Consortium, as a membership-based organization and movement; (b) UNEP WCMC, towards the expansion of the Global ICCA Registry; (c) the IUCN Global Programme on Protected Areas (GPAP) for the assessment of national systems of governance for protected and conserved areas; and (d) the NGO Natural Justice to produce an updated legal analysis of the situation of ICCAs in 20 countries.

#### Box 5. Colombia: safeguarding ICCAs by protecting Afro-Colombian culture

The *Bajo Guapi* and *Río Guají* are Afro-Colombian communities who live in collective territories in the Chocó Bioregion of coastal Colombia, a major biodiversity hotspot threatened by years of violence and encroachment by outsiders. The current educational system also fails to recognize Afro-Colombian traditional cultural practices, gradually weakening and eroding the customary natural resource management systems among younger generations.



In the municipality of *Bajo Guapi*, the women became concerned by the loss of *azoteas* — a system of sustainable use techniques passed down by women to their children and grandchildren. With support from the ICCA-GSI, an SGP Colombia project focused on the recovery of traditional conservation practices in natural resource management through a self-strengthening process. The project assisted the community custodians to evaluate and respond to threats and opportunities by learning from field trials, innovating, and connecting with other communities, civil society organizations and government allies.

The results of the female-led community work included: (i) a complete census of 85 traditional knowledge stewards across a wide spectrum of trades and skills; (ii) identification of local species according to their economic, cultural and social importance, including scarce or endangered species in need of protection; and (iii) a mapping of landscape zones for collective and individual use. The efforts resulted in a suite of ancestral practices implemented in 12 community-monitored plots that incorporate rules of care and respect for nature. A compilation of 34 traditional recipes was also developed with food from the sea, rivers, and jungles to help preserve the gastronomic memory of these oral cultures.

### Community-Based REDD+ (CBR+)

Developed under the auspices of the UNFCCC to mitigate greenhouse gases through the protection of the world's forests, the initiative to Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) is a multi-lateral mechanism within the 2015 Paris Accord on climate change. Indigenous Peoples and forest-dependent communities – as custodians of large forest areas – are crucial stakeholders for the future success of REDD+. Importantly, the rights, livelihoods and customary lands of Indigenous Peoples are expected to be directly impacted by REDD+ activities, generating a lot of interest, as well as concerns from Indigenous

Peoples, local communities, and NGO networks alike. In this context, the World Bank and UN system have launched a number of efforts to ensure the full and effective engagement and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and forest communities within REDD+. These include the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and UN-REDD programme as a tripartite partnership between the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, the UN Environment Programme, and UNDP.

In partnership with the UN-REDD programme, and funding from the Government of Norway, the Community-Based REDD+ (CBR+) initiative was designed to respond directly to the needs of Indigenous Peoples and local communities within the broader REDD+ planning and implementation framework. The CBR+ initiative was launched at the UNPFII in 2013 as a hands-on, bottom-up endeavour to secure genuine stakeholder engagement in REDD+, as well as to foster synergies between local action and national REDD+ policy frameworks. Delivered by the SGP, the CBR+ programme sought to provide technical assistance and small grants up to \$50,000 directly to forest-dependent communities.

Over six years, CBR+ was implemented in six pilot countries (Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay and Sri Lanka). Its core objectives were to: (i) support the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, communities and civil society in national-level processes related to REDD+; (ii) build the capacity and awareness of communities to engage in REDD+ activities and processes; (iii) facilitate the integration of community-based activities, knowledge and ideas into national REDD+ processes; and (iv) develop and share knowledge and lessons learned from community-based experiences to inform national and international REDD+ policies and practice.

#### **Box 6. SGP Nigeria: Community-Based REDD+ in the Cross-River State**

Nigeria has one of the highest deforestation rates in the world, with less than 10 percent of the country's forest cover remaining. Starting in 2010, the UN-REDD Programme has provided technical support to the country's national efforts at forest conservation. From 2014 to 2017, the Cross-River State, which has more than 50 percent of Nigeria's remaining tropical forests, received support from CBR+ to promote improved forest management, community development, and sustainable energy alternatives. As of mid-2018, more than 300 households across 21 communities benefited from CBR+.



Working directly with a range of civil-society groups in the Cross-River State, CBR+ sought to redefine participatory and local-level forest management and conservation practices. Amongst the joint activities undertaken through the CBR+ portfolio, villagers developed forest management plans, conducted reforestation activities, and engaged in enrichment planting of indigenous non-timber forest products. These included the production of bush mango, which can yield up to US\$10,000 in annual sales of mature fruits per hectare, and improved processing of cassava and sustainable cocoa cultivation to enhance productivity and increasing household incomes by at least 10 percent.

The outcomes and experiences from the CBR+ Programme also fed into Nigeria's national REDD+ process, and provided a platform to encourage dialogue among different groups to ensure that community experiences were integrated into the Cross-River State REDD+ Strategy. In the village of *Edondon*, Chief Barry Inyang noted that one CBR+ project brought together a divided community for the first time. *"With support from CBR+ . . . we have developed a community forest management plan with bylaws, and we have started to regenerate degraded forest sites, improve livelihoods for women, and improve the value chain for cocoa, the major driver of forest loss."*

## Community-Based Adaptation (CBA)

In 2009, SGP entered into a partnership with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT, formerly known as AusAID) with the objective to support small grants for community-based adaptation (CBA) to improve the resilience of local communities in 41 countries, including 37 Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The three-tier goals of the CBA programme were to: (i) reduce the vulnerability and improve adaptive capacity of local communities to the adverse effects of climate change; (ii) provide countries with concrete ground-level experience with local climate change adaptation; and (iii) provide policy lessons and mainstream CBA within national processes and scale up best practices.

During the 11 years of implementation, the programme has funded over 184 projects, benefitted over 250,000 persons and community members, restored over 12,000 hectares of degraded lands and built the capacity of over 1,200 community-based organizations, including Indigenous Peoples groups.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the fourth IPCC assessment report noted that Indigenous and traditional knowledge is an “*invaluable basis for developing adaptation and natural resource management strategies in response to environmental and other forms of change*”. To this end, as part of the portfolio of SIDS CBA projects on water security, agriculture, land degradation and coastal zone management, the SGP sought avenues to increase the number of eligible projects pertaining to Indigenous and traditional knowledge. These included techniques to reduce vulnerability to climate change through participatory-video documentation of traditional knowledge; planting of salt-tolerant varieties of taro (Palau, Federated States of Micronesia); revival of ancestral survival foods at the time of hurricanes (Vanuatu); cultural knowledge of underwater reef systems (Solomon Islands); and seasonal calendars linked to customary planting and harvesting cycles found widely across the Pacific.

### Box 7. SGP Timor Leste: CBA through Indigenous agroforestry practices

The majority of Timor Leste’s population lives in remote rural areas, with 80 percent dependent on subsistence rain-fed agriculture across rugged mountainous terrain. As such, Timorese farmers’ inability to cope with the impacts of climate change, including an increased incidence of drought, rainfall variability and bush fires, has been a major driver of food insecurity. In the community of Suco Gariuai, faced with high rates of poverty and limited livelihood options, an SGP CBA project sought to revive the customary law of *tara bandu*, an ancestral agroforestry practice, to help reduce climate vulnerabilities.



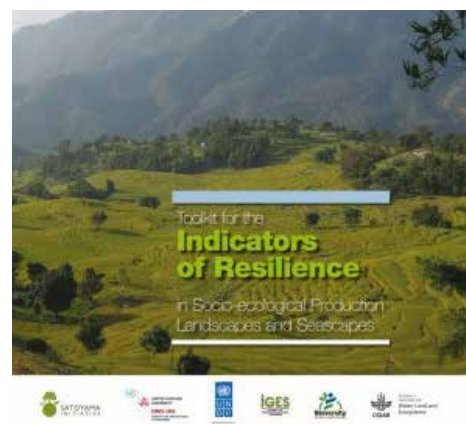
The *tara bandu* customary law is an indigenous historical practice used to resolve conflicts based on the power of public agreement. The project to revive *tara bandu* was implemented by 87 households under the guidance of a community-based institution, the *Grupo Komunitade To’os Nain Hadomi Ambiente*. The *tara bandu* customary practice was integrated into the CBA project design, with close guidance and support from traditional leaders throughout the project cycle, which contributed to preventing community conflicts and reducing absenteeism in project implementation. Through the SIDS CBA project, the community reforested 2.5 hectares of degraded lands with drought-tolerant species such as candlenut trees and used new agroforestry techniques that allowed for the planting of vegetables with shorter growing cycles. The crops were harvested multiple times in a year and weekly household incomes increased from \$30 to \$70 USD.

## Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS)

The Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) was launched in 2011 as a flagship program of the Satoyama Initiative, a global effort to promote sustainable use of natural resources in socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLs). The partnership has been implemented by the SGP, and funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund of the CBD Secretariat, and implemented in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, and United Nations University's Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability.

Across the 20 participating countries, COMDEKS has deployed a set of socio-ecological resilience indicators as an integral part of its design. More than 200 communities have used the SEPL indicators developed by Bioversity International and partners across a wide variety of landscapes and seascapes. A toolkit on the indicators provides guidance for engaging local communities in adaptive management of landscapes and seascapes. The indicators assess a range of factors contributing to resilience in SEPLs, including the importance of traditional knowledge transmission and working with Indigenous Peoples.

In Ecuador, COMDEKS has supported the indigenous *kichwa chakra* system, a traditional agricultural system, promoting the use of spatial domains called *chakra*, whereby Indigenous women implement differentiated strategies of exchange, sales and subsistence. In Ecuador, the landscape area selected for COMDEKS, the Alto Napo River watershed, is located between the Andes Mountains and Amazonian Lowlands. By recognizing and integrating the *chakra* system, projects have resulted in the restoration of local knowledge, increased incomes, and conservation of forests. In Nepal, the target landscape for COMDEKS activities took place in the Manahari river watershed, where aquaculture in the form of constructed fishponds, and river-bank farming have contributed to the food security of the Indigenous *Chepang* and *Tamang* communities. In addition to helping the Indigenous communities to legally register their own organizations to carry out activities, projects have created linkages between government departments, increasing the level of technical support to community-based productive activities in the socio-ecological production landscape.



## South-South exchange: International Network for Mountain Indigenous Peoples (INMIP)

The International Network for Mountain Indigenous Peoples (INMIP) was established in Bhutan in 2014 with ten participating countries to support the capacity building of indigenous Biocultural Heritage Territories and knowledge-sharing of climate change adaptation practices and innovations amongst mountain Indigenous Peoples. INMIP has gone on to become an important international exchange platform, including a regular series of gatherings of mountain Indigenous Peoples to exchange adaptation techniques held in different mountain regions (e.g. Taiwan, Tajikistan, China), as well as for the international transfer of seed varieties and germplasm between Indigenous Peoples under the framework of the Nagoya Protocol.

The SGP has been engaging with INMIP since its inception through its 'horizontal learning exchange' workshops, an approach that seeks to generate cross-fertilization between knowledge systems. Techniques have included public fora with the goal of generating debate on mountain network themes, and experiential knowledge exchanges held in a field-based format where the natural and human-engineered landscapes are utilized to

identify, assess, and implement innovations to support Indigenous mountain communities in adapting to climate change. The walking workshop approach is expected to facilitate capacity building at different levels and permit vertical (scaling-up) and horizontal (scaling-out) replication to other realities and contexts.

In 2017, the SGP supported the strengthening of INMIP through a global South-South knowledge sharing grant which included a workshop held at the Potato Park in Cusco, Peru, which was attended by over 100 Indigenous people representing 39 mountain communities from 11 countries. The Potato Park is the first area to be legally recognized under Peru's new law on Agrobiodiversity Zones and sets a precedent for legal recognition of the country's bio-cultural heritage territories. The Indigenous Peoples joined 26 representatives from civil society, research, government and donor organizations to discuss the role of both Indigenous and modern knowledge systems in improving the well-being of mountain communities in the face of climate change.



## Partnering with Indigenous Peoples in UNFCCC climate negotiations

The obligation to engage Indigenous Peoples in climate change actions has been explicitly recognized in the UNFCCC Cancun Agreement (2010).<sup>34</sup> The Paris Accord further acknowledges the positive contribution of Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge systems in achieving its goals,<sup>35</sup> and the importance of strengthening practices and efforts of local communities and Indigenous Peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change.<sup>36</sup> The UNFCCC COP20 in 2014 recognized that one of the key obstacles to realizing this role is lack of Indigenous Peoples-specific projects and international funding, and invited the Green Climate Fund (GCF) *"to enhance their consideration of local, Indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices and their integration into adaptation planning and practices, as well as procedures for monitoring, evaluation and reporting"*, as well as to learn from the experience of other funding mechanisms.<sup>37</sup>

As noted above, a large body of research has shown that when use Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities have legally recognized and enforceable rights, deforestation and carbon emissions can be significantly lower as compared with other forests. Community and Indigenous forests in Brazil are estimated to store 36 percent more carbon per hectare and emit 27 times less carbon dioxide from deforestation than forests not under community control. According to the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), evidence suggests that community-based systems of grassland management, such as migratory pastoral and agro-pastoral systems, tend to support greater carbon storage than ranching or sedentary models.<sup>38</sup>

In this context, as part of its Grantmakers+ role, the SGP partnered with the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC), supported by the Governments of Norway, France and Peru, and the UN Secretary-General's Office, to facilitate the integration of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities priorities

<sup>34</sup> <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> "Parties acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, 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 knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems".

<sup>36</sup> "Recognizes the need to strengthen knowledge, technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and indigenous peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change, and establishes a platform for the exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner."

<sup>37</sup> Decision 4/CP.20, Paragraph 4 along with document FCCC/SBSTA/2014/INF.11

<sup>38</sup> RRI, Issue Brief 1: Indigenous Peoples and Local Community Tenure In the INDCS: Status and Recommendations, April 2016.

into the 2015 Paris Climate Accord. Together with the network of UNDP Country Offices, SGP helped raise awareness and build capacity for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to define collective positions on key climate issues with the goal of embedding of local priorities into their countries' negotiating positions through series of national policy dialogues to facilitate this exchange of views in target countries.<sup>39</sup>

Participants in the national Indigenous Peoples-government dialogues included a balance of Indigenous and local community representatives, with attention to achieving gender balance and strong representation of youth and grassroots representatives. The dialogues provided Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities an opportunity to converse with government representatives, share their concerns and priorities around climate change, and find common ground on key issues of relevance to the COP21 negotiations.

### Artisanal and small-scale gold mining

According to the UN Environment Programme's Global Mercury Assessment Report (2018), an estimated 38 percent of total anthropogenic emissions of mercury to the atmosphere are associated with artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM).<sup>40</sup> In addition, the illegal use of mercury in the ASGM sector often overlaps significantly with the lands and territories of Indigenous Peoples in South America (e.g. Amazonian regions of Brazil, Colombia, Guyana, Suriname, and Venezuela), and Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and other countries of the Sahel). Similarly, Indigenous Peoples and First Nations living in the Arctic and Pacific SIDS are often at greater risk of the negative health effects of mercury poisoning through diets rich in fish and other marine animals, as mercury from the environment accumulates in higher concentrations in the flesh of animals at the top of the food chain.

At the second Conference of Parties to the Minamata Convention in Nov 2018, the SGP reported on the list of projects to support the elimination of mercury pollution. In 2019, to further support the implementation of the Minamata Convention at the community level, SGP launched an OP6 Innovation Programme on ASGM to address mercury contamination and its associated threats to ecosystems and health of vulnerable populations, including Indigenous Peoples. In collaboration with the GEF6 programme on Global Opportunities for Long-Term Development in the ASGM sector (GEF GOLD) and the Zero Mercury Working Group, SGP has initiated a set of pilot activities in seven country programmes<sup>41</sup> to develop ASGM strategies to: (i) demonstrate innovative technologies to reduce and eliminate mercury use; (ii) support alternative livelihoods to reduce unsustainable and harmful mining practices; (iii) raise awareness, improve knowledge and promote networking; and (iv) conduct policy development and influence.



<sup>39</sup> Countries which completed the Indigenous Peoples-government dialogues include: Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Panama, Mexico, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Niger, Tanzania, Indonesia, The Philippines, Viet Nam, Thailand, and Fiji.

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/publication/global-mercury-assessment-2018>

<sup>41</sup> The pilot countries in the OP6 Innovation Programme include Burkina Faso, Ghana, the Republic of Guinea, Mali, Mongolia, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

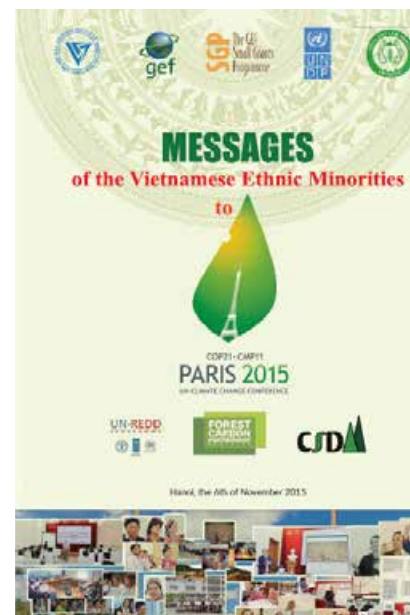
## Indigenous Peoples' Access to Energy

Human rights concerns have been largely absent from international efforts and debates relating to the provision of energy. At the same time, Indigenous territories have often times been expected to host large-scale energy projects without respect for their rights, lacking meaningful consultations and consent. This situation has resulted in numerous conflicts which have undermined Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determined development. As a result, many Indigenous Peoples have increasingly called for the strengthening of social and environmental safeguards (SES) by international development institutions — including in the consistent implementation and application of SES policies.

At the same time, if SES safeguards and policies are met, many Indigenous Peoples have noted that their land and territories offer innovative renewable energy solutions, and are willing to become active contributors to solving problems surrounding energy access and clean energy. To address this gap, SGP launched the OP6 Indigenous Peoples' access to energy programme seeking to support field-based, action-oriented renewable energy projects led by Indigenous Peoples with tangible impacts on the SDGs in seven countries.<sup>42</sup> The goal of the programme has been to identify innovative projects that support a broad spectrum of culturally-appropriate technologies in Indigenous Peoples territories, including those which combine western science and traditional knowledge systems, with quantifiable measurements.

The OP6 Innovation Programme launched in 2019 has given priority to projects in the following areas: (a) empowerment of Indigenous Peoples to accelerate progress in renewable energy; (b) projects with multiple co-benefits, including greater community cohesion, that contribute to at least two or more of the UN SDGs; (c) participation of Indigenous women and youth, in line with their self-determined development; (d) testing of appropriate renewable energy technologies in Indigenous Peoples lands and territories (i.e. micro-hydro, solar, wind, biogas).

At the global level, the SGP OP6 Innovation Programme is collaborating with the Right Energy Partnership (REP) of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG) on Sustainable Development. Working with and supporting the IPMG, the SGP Innovation Programme is exploring further regional and global partnership for advocacy and co-financing agreements with a range of relevant impact investors, donors, and philanthropic organizations.



<sup>42</sup> The pilot SGP countries include: El Salvador, Honduras, Cambodia, Timor Leste, Nepal, DR Congo and Cameroon.

# Future directions

For the last twenty-eight years, the SGP has partnered with Indigenous Peoples across an array of themes ranging from the co-management of World Heritage Sites, the contribution of ICCAs towards the Strategic Plan on Biodiversity and the Aichi Targets, supporting community-based adaptation and the role of traditional knowledge in adapting to climate change, mitigating the impacts of mercury on the health of Indigenous Peoples, and other topics. Looking ahead, the SGP is well-placed to continue in its 'Grantmakers+' role to advocate for the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and to collaborate with an expanding number of donors and partners to enhance support and increase Indigenous Peoples access to international finance through its existing and effective operational procedures and structures.

SGP's pioneering work on alternative formats such as participatory video, have not yet been fully adopted across the SGP country programmes, across UNDP programmes, or by other GEF agencies and donors working with Indigenous Peoples – offering new avenues for programming and mainstreaming.<sup>43</sup> The pilot experience of the Indigenous Peoples Fellowship initiative, designed in consultation with Conservation International and Tribal Link which offer similar schemes, can be further expanded and strengthened amongst international agencies and UN bodies. Building upon SGP's role as a GEF corporate programme, it is hoped that this publication has shown what operational innovations are possible, opening the door to expanded collaboration between SGP and a wider set of partners and agencies.

The 2019 portfolio review, summarized in Chapter 1, also identified some practical recommendations for SGP to improve its engagement with Indigenous Peoples during its 7<sup>th</sup> Operational Phase (OP7) running from 2020-2024. These include: (a) the need for further research on the impediments and obstacles for Indigenous Peoples to access SGP support in countries with large Indigenous populations; (b) enhanced learning exchanges and knowledge sharing among SGP country programmes to increase projects directly managed by Indigenous Peoples; (c) attention to the role of the Indigenous Peoples focal point in NSCs, including a better understanding on the working definition of Indigenous Peoples in target countries; (d) updated SGP project data systems to track projects with Indigenous Peoples, alongside options for documentation of flexible project formats; and (e) improved SGP knowledge management systems and communication tools (Annex 2).

## Scaling up SGP assistance to Indigenous Peoples

Over the course of various consultations held with Indigenous Peoples in international policy settings (i.e. UNPFII, CBD and UNFCCC negotiations, IUCN World Conservation Congress), Indigenous Peoples have repeatedly expressed the need to go beyond receiving small grants assistance, sharing a desire to work with funding agencies at a greater level of ambition with respect to landscape and territorial-level impacts. Indigenous Peoples have also referred to an increasing need for direct access to international finance, avoiding an over-dependency on intermediaries such as international NGOs.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> The 2019 review observed that SGP "currently allows grantees to utilize alternative proposal formats, including video proposals, photo stories, among others", but noted that "only 7 countries reported the regular use of video proposals".

<sup>44</sup> UNFCCC COP22 workshop 'Dialogue on the Engagement of the Green Climate Fund and its Accredited Entities with Indigenous Peoples and a Possible Funding Window for Indigenous Peoples', Marrakech, 12-13 November 2016.





In this respect, a subset of Indigenous Peoples organizations<sup>45</sup> have started receiving scaled up climate related financial flows from the GEF, the European Union, World Bank, regional developments banks, as well as bilateral donors such as Norway. In some countries, such as Australia, Canada and Mexico, national government programmes now also provide significant finance streams for Indigenous Peoples' direct actions to tackle climate-related concerns. However, the estimated amount of international finance for Indigenous Peoples still remains far below what is needed to address the challenges posed by climate change and other environmental issues.<sup>46</sup>

Overall, whilst there has been a slight increase in Indigenous Peoples access to global finance over the past ten years, individual grants still fall within the \$50,000 to \$500,000 range. For example, the World Bank's Dedicated Grant Mechanism (DGM) for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, administered by Conservation International in 14 countries, also still provides a substantial proportion of its grant finance at an average level between \$25,000-\$40,000.<sup>47</sup> The International Land and Forest Tenure Facility is a notable exception which now proposes grants to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities up to \$3 million in size to secure Indigenous land rights, together with the GEF7 'Inclusive Conservation Initiative' which is targeting increased levels of finance to Indigenous Peoples.

During the implementation of OP7 (2020-2024), SGP's rich experience as an incubator programme to demonstrate grass-roots solutions implemented directly by Indigenous Peoples is expected to identify new pathways to scale up an expanded portfolio of local action projects within UNDP's Nature, Climate and Energy and GEF portfolio, as well as with other donors and vertical funds. As the long-term implementing agency for the SGP, UNDP is in the process of enhancing its toolbox of instruments, such as a Low Value Grants (LVGs) and performance-based payments, now available under the revised Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP) which are expected to become increasingly relevant to the engagement of civil society initiatives by UNDP Country Offices.

<sup>45</sup> For example, in Africa: the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee and MPIDO, in Latin America and the Caribbean: COICA, ACICAFOC, Sotizil, SATIIM; in Asia: Tebtebba, AIPP, AMAN; see International Funders of Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) annual report (2015).

<sup>46</sup> United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), Indigenous Peoples Funds Assessment (October 2015).

<sup>47</sup> The DGM is governed by a global Steering Committee of 14 Indigenous Peoples (one from each pilot country) and National Steering Committees in each country whose composition can vary between country, together with a range of implementing delivery partners for the capacity-building and technical assistance components.

Amongst the range of future priorities, opportunities to expand the UNDP local action offer on blending grant-based finance with non-grant investments responding to climate change and accelerator initiatives towards the 2030 SDGs seems compelling. Under the terms of the 2015 Paris Accord, 2020 was identified as a critical year for UNFCCC state parties to update and raise the level of ambition of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). During the UN General Assembly's 'High Level Summit on Biodiversity' held in September 2020, many Heads of State made bold commitments to achieve climate neutrality by the year 2050. Whilst only a subset of these NDCs currently explicitly reference Indigenous Peoples, many of the targets and mitigation activities are likely to have a direct bearing and impact on the territories of Indigenous Peoples, representing a significant opportunity for SGP to assist governments to effectively partner with and safeguard the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities over the next decade.

Within the context of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework negotiations taking place in 2020, a renewed effort by the SGP to partner with Indigenous Peoples and local communities with respect to recognizing the role of spatial approaches and traditional knowledge within the new framework (expected to be decided by the COP15 in 2021) seems a likely avenue for expanded partnerships given an anticipated "30 percent by 2030 target" for protected and conserved areas and other related goals. Building on the collaboration from OP6 and before with the Governments of Germany and Japan, these avenues may include an expanded focus on ICCAs, other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), and socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes.

Similarly, given the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Decade of ecosystem restoration 2021-2030 declared by the UN General Assembly in March 2019, SGP is well-positioned to work with civil society partners to integrate the concerns of different Rio Conventions in order to achieve the ambitious Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets to restore 350 million hectares of degraded land between now and 2030. Entry points for Indigenous Peoples may be focused on efforts to restore rangelands by working with nomadic pastoralists, as well as through peatland and forest-based regeneration with Indigenous Peoples as forest guardians in the Congo Basin, South-East Asia and the Amazon.

Lastly, with the global COVID-19 pandemic which has spread across the planet in 2020, SGP will be expected to step up to the task to assist Indigenous Peoples to reinforce their socio-ecological resilience to withstand and recover from a broad range of shocks, including those linked to zoonoses and climate-related disasters. Possible tangible measures currently being developed include supporting improved agroecological practices for food sovereignty, increased reciprocity networks between Indigenous Peoples and producer organizations, measures to reduce the spread of zoonotic diseases through the illegal trade in wildlife, off-grid energy solutions through renewable energy, and the defence of Indigenous Peoples' territories of life for community well-being under a 'One Health' approach.



# Annex 1:

## SGP countries with presence of Indigenous Peoples

Afghanistan	Ghana	Paraguay
Algeria	Guatemala	People's rep. of China
Argentina	Guinea-Bissau	Peru
Armenia	Guyana	Philippines
Belize	Honduras	Rwanda
Benin	India	St Vincent & the Grenadines
Bhutan	Indonesia	Samoa
Bolivia	Iran (Islamic rep. of)	Senegal
Botswana	Jordan	Solomon Islands
Brazil	Kenya	South Africa
Burkina Faso	Kiribati	Sri Lanka
Burundi	Kyrgyzstan	Suriname
Cambodia	Lao people's dem. Rep.	Syrian Arab republic*
Cameroon, rep. of	Liberia	Thailand
Central African rep.	Madagascar	Timor-Leste
Chad*	Malaysia	Togo
Chile*	Mali	Tokelau
Colombia	Marshall Islands	Tonga
Congo Brazzaville	Mauritania	Trinidad and Tobago
Cook Islands	Mexico	Tunisia
Costa Rica	Mongolia	Turkey
Cote d'Ivoire	Morocco	Uganda
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	Mozambique	Ukraine
Dominica	Namibia	Rep. of Tanzania
Ecuador	Nepal	Uzbekistan
Egypt	Nicaragua*	Vanuatu
El Salvador	Niger	Venezuela
Eritrea	Nigeria	Viet nam
Ethiopia	Pakistan	Zambia
Federated states of Micronesia	Palau	Zimbabwe
Fiji	Panama	
Gambia	Papua New Guinea	

Sources: SGP Country Programme Offices; GEF; UNDP; [www.iwgia.org](http://www.iwgia.org); [www.minorityrights.org](http://www.minorityrights.org); [www.refworld.org](http://www.refworld.org).

\* Note: SGP Country Programme Office has closed.

# Annex 2:

## Programming recommendations for SGP OP7

### SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SGP ENGAGEMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DURING OP7 (LEDWITH 2019)

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**RECOMMENDATION 1:**

Conduct further research to enhance SGP country engagement in countries with low rates of support to Indigenous Peoples

Particular attention may be focused on countries where the number of SGP projects involving Indigenous Peoples is low relative to the country's total Indigenous population. A research survey may identify the country-specific causes and initiate a targeted process to implement activities to strengthen collaboration with Indigenous Peoples during OP7.

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**RECOMMENDATION 2:**

Enhance learning exchanges and knowledge sharing among SGP country programmes to increase projects managed by Indigenous Peoples

The 2019 portfolio review and interviews identified several techniques implemented that resulted in projects directly managed by Indigenous Peoples. Planning grants have been found to help facilitate project proposals from Indigenous Peoples, yet only account for 12% of the SGP Indigenous Peoples portfolio, and may be expanded. Other opportunities include tutorials on video proposals; leveraging technical expertise of government and NGO partners; Indigenous Peoples-specific manuals for project development; network building; and SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellows (current and future alumni) to share knowledge and identify opportunities to strengthen projects led by Indigenous Peoples.

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**RECOMMENDATION 3:**

Clarify and communicate a definition of Indigenous Peoples and expectations for SGP country programmes with Indigenous Peoples within their borders

The 2019 portfolio review suggests that there has been some confusion amongst a small group of SGP countries on the working definition of Indigenous Peoples. CPMT may include guidance related to participation of Indigenous Peoples on the NSC; identification of an Indigenous Peoples Focal Point for every country with the presence of Indigenous Peoples; together with webinar trainings to share information in different languages, and accommodate staff turnover.

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**RECOMMENDATION 4:**

Update and adjust SGP project data systems to track projects with Indigenous Peoples and support project documentation needs

Consideration be given to including additional OP7 indicators and/or tracking systems to identify projects that involve Indigenous Peoples. Combined with a strong awareness about Indigenous Peoples amongst SGP staff, this would result in SGP's enhanced ability to efficiently track progress and use data to analyse future investment opportunities. Interviews with SGP staff suggest that it would also be helpful for the SGP database to be more flexible, especially related to project document upload options for alternative proposal formats.

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**RECOMMENDATION 5:**

Review existing SGP knowledge management systems and communication tools to determine if they can be strengthened

The 2019 portfolio review noted that SGP has developed numerous guidance frameworks, tools, and trainings to facilitate Indigenous Peoples projects. Many of these are known across countries and regions, but surveys and interviews suggest that there are opportunities to further strengthen knowledge sharing – either through the publications library, SGP database and intranet, and/or re-organizing SGP country programmes' existing materials.

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The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) since 1992. SGP grantmaking in over 125 countries promotes community-based innovation, capacity development, and empowerment through sustainable development projects of local civil society organizations with special consideration for indigenous peoples, women, and youth. SGP has supported over 20,000 community-based projects in biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, prevention of land degradation, protection of international waters, and reduction of the impact of chemicals, while generating sustainable livelihoods.



The Global Environment Facility (GEF), established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, is a catalyst for action on the environment — and much more. Through its strategic investments, the GEF works with partners to tackle the planet's biggest environmental issues. Our funding also helps reduce poverty, strengthen governance and achieve greater equality between women and men. As such, we occupy a unique space in the global partnership for a more sustainable planet.



UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in 177 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations. [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)



304 E 45<sup>th</sup> Street  
UNDP, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
USA

[sgp.info@undp.org](mailto:sgp.info@undp.org)  
[www.sgp.undp.org](http://www.sgp.undp.org)