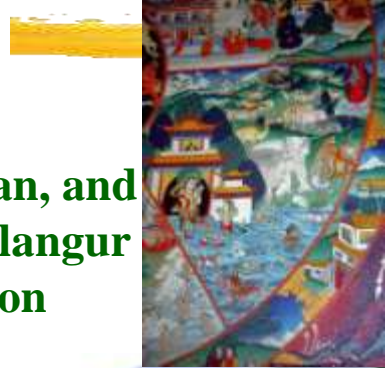


Indigenous Peoples' and Local Community Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCAs)

Experiences from India





Sacred sites... severe decline, but still in hundreds or thousands



Sacred river and sacred fish,
Shringeri, Karnataka

Sacred pond and forests,
Uttaranchal





Blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*) - Protected by the Bishnoi community, Rajasthan/Punjab

Wildlife populations

nesting, roosting,
feeding habitats

**Rushikulya turtle conservation,
Orissa**



**Traditional village heronry, Kokare
Bellure, Karnataka**

More than 50 community conserved fish sanctuaries recorded so far only from two states...possibly 1000s more

Protecting rich freshwater fish diversity

Disappearing fast because of dams, water pollution and other reasons.



Above: Waitarna Fish Sanctuary in Western Ghats Maharashtra. Threatened by upstream and downstream dams

Photo: Parineeta Dandekar, SANDRP



Above: Congregation of endangered Mahseer at Yenekal Sanctuary

Photo: Parineeta Dandekar

Towards tribal self-rule, with conservation



All decisions in *gram sabha* (village assembly);
no activity even by
government officials
without sabha consent



Informed decisions
through monitoring, and
regular study circles
(*abhyas gat*)

Amongst 1st CFR titles: 1800ha of forests conserved by villagers of Mendha-Lekha, Gadchiroli, Maharashtra



After struggle, GS claimed right to transit permit; has traded bamboo worth Rs. ??? Lakhs

Forest planning process initiated

1800ha of standing forests conserved by villagers of Mendha-Lekha, Gadchiroli, Maharashtra



CCAs...linking wild and domesticated biodiversity, and associated cultures...providing resilience and adaptation possibilities



What kind of institutions do these diverse initiatives follow?

- **Informal** (*general spirit of conservation*)
- **Formal** (*forest committee, youth committee, people's sanctuary trust, etc*)
- **Solitary or Cluster**
- **Traditional or modified but based on traditional** (Arunachal Pradesh)
- **Networks at landscape or state level** (*e.g. Orissa community forest forum*)

What Role do CCAs play in achieving Aichi Target 11 in India

- PAs in India currently cover about 5% area
- CCAs within PAs not legally recognised till recently (although will change with Forest Rights Act)
- Most ecosystems other than forests such as rivers, wetlands, grasslands are not adequately covered under PA system , but many come under different community protection and management regimes
- Most documented CCAs in India are outside the existing PA system

If all of these are considered “other effective area based measures for conservation” provided concerned communities so wish can increase the area under conservation many fold.

Threats faced by CCAs in India

- Mining, dams, tourism, urbanisation etc: 9% or above economic growth “at all costs”
- As a result changing community aspirations
- **Imposition of government schemes and programmes** (*joint forest management, some protected areas*)
- **Continued “invisibility” in formal conservation circles although mentioned often**
- **Lack of security of tenure** (*particularly in non forest ecosystems*)

Legal recognition of ICCAs in India

- Wild Life Act: Community Reserves
- Biodiversity Act: Heritage Sites
- Forest Act 1927: Village Forests
- Environment Protection Act 1986: Ecosensitive Areas
- **Forest Rights Act 2006: Community forests**

CFRs: Rights for conservation

- Provides “right to protect, regenerate, conserve or manage any CFRs traditionally protected and conserved for sustainable use”.
- Empowers communities to protect wildlife, forest and biodiversity.
- Empowers communities to protect their habitats from any destructive practices that may affect their cultural and natural heritage.
- Confers on communities the power to constitute Committees for this

Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Sanctuary & (illegal) Tiger Reserve, Karnataka



CFR titles to Soliga, over half of sanctuary; community-based wildlife/tiger conservation plan process initiated



Some Future steps to Achieve Aichi Targets

- Creating an information and database at the government level on CCAs.**
- Strategically and effectively implementing rights legislation like FRA and others, particularly in PAs, customary territories of pastoralist and nomadic communities and sacred areas**
- Establishing FRA-like laws for non-forest ecosystems such as fresh water, coastal and marine areas.**
- Bringing flexibility in PA laws to incorporate CCAs when so desired by the communities and non imposition of govt. schemes and projects such as Joint Forest Management**
- No implementation of measures such as REDD without fully understanding their implications on rights, local governance and community conservation.**
- No diversion of CCAs and other customary territories for dams, mines..., when locally opposed. Presence of CCAs to be included in project clearance processes**
- Efforts within the forestry establishment to changes attitudes and power balance.**



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