



Internal CEESP NRGF Background Brief #4

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Being Useful - Ten questions to be answered through the Natural Resources Governance Framework

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As has been pointed out in early IUCN drafts, the Natural Resources Governance Framework (NRGF) will be of use to multiple 'stakeholders'. The information generated will help inform policy makers and legal drafters at national, regional and international levels. The information will also be of direct benefit to indigenous and local communities. While CEESP is interested in enabling the NRGF to deliver useful information to all stakeholders, the Commission has consistently maintained that the Natural Resources Governance Framework needs to be particularly accessible and useful to indigenous peoples and communities. What does being useful mean? What information is of most benefit to indigenous peoples and communities to assist them in their dealings with governments and others in negotiating for the return of their traditional territories, and/or their ability to develop and implement decisions on access, sustainable utilisation and sharing of benefits of natural resources? What options are available? What has been achieved elsewhere?

The following questions have been developed following presentation of the objectives and assumptions of the Natural Resources Governance Framework (NRGF) to a group of indigenous researchers (academic and community) at *He Manawa Whenua* Conference, Hamilton, New Zealand on 2 July 2013. The Conference brought together over 300 indigenous researchers from throughout the world.

He Manawa Whenua is the Māori term for a subterranean aquifer or an underground spring. It is from this source that the most pure, clear and refreshing water is obtained, being naturally filtered through the land before emerging at the surface. Water is life, and because a *Manawa Whenua* originates deep with the earth, Māori believe it is a most precious resource vital for the well-being of the people. The conference viewed Māori knowledge as a *Manawa Whenua*, or a pool of knowledge, that is situated within the heart of the people. Like the water, this knowledge has been filtered throughout time by the community as well as the environment to become

central to the life and well-being of Māori.¹ The conference explored the pool of Māori knowledge and research under the following three themes,

- He Manawa Auaha | Innovation | Imagine the Invisible
- He Manawa Ora | Well-Being | Explore the Potential
- He Manawa Toitōi | Inspiration | Defy the Impossible

Participants were presented with the objectives and assumptions of the NRGF together with the message that the litmus test for CEESP is that the NRGF should be easily accessible and useful to indigenous peoples and communities, and were asked according to their experience as indigenous researchers what information would the NRGF need to provide in order to assist the communities they work within and/or are part of? The following ten questions represent their responses as well as those of some CEESP members.

1. To what extent are formal natural resources governance arrangements in use now? (by country, by governance type and by resource)
2. How many of these have shared governance arrangements?
3. Within the shared governance arrangements, do all partners have the same ability to make and implement decisions?
4. Within the shared governance arrangements, does one partner have a right of veto over the other(s)?
5. How many shared governance arrangements include indigenous peoples/communities as partners?
6. To what extent is empowering legislation used for shared governance arrangements?
7. Is there a correlation between shared governance arrangements and improved environmental outcomes? Conversely is there a correlation between governance solely by governments and poor environmental outcomes?
8. What guidelines or principles are being used to decide on the process of negotiation of a governance arrangement?
9. To what extent are women involved in governance arrangement negotiations and implementation?
10. Based on the late Professor Elinor Ostrom's work on how common pool resources could be governed sustainably and equitably in a community,² how many of these design principles are incorporated into existing natural resources governance arrangements?

¹ For more information on He Manawa Whenua conference see: <http://www.waikato.ac.nz/rangahau/hemanawawhenua/programme>

² - See more at: <http://onthecommons.org/magazine/elinor-ostroms-8-principles-managing-commons#sthash.VdnXD2s3.dpuf>

Eight Principles for Managing Common Pool Resources

1. Define clear group boundaries.
2. Match rules governing use of common goods to local needs and conditions.
3. Ensure that those affected by the rules can participate in modifying the rules.
4. Make sure the rule-making rights of community members are respected by outside authorities.
5. Develop a system, carried out by community members, for monitoring members' behaviour.
6. Use graduated sanctions for rule violators.
7. Provide accessible, low-cost means for dispute resolution.
8. Build responsibility for governing the common resource in nested tiers from the lowest level up to the entire interconnected system.