



Natural Resource
Governance
Framework

ENHANCING LEARNING AND COLLABORATION ON NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE IN IUCN

A Natural Resource Governance Framework (NRGF) Mapping
Analysis of IUCN Projects and Initiatives

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Natural Resource Governance Framework (NRGF) is an IUCN initiative created for the purpose of providing a robust, inclusive, and credible approach to assessing and strengthening natural resource governance, at multiple levels and in diverse contexts. The overarching goal of NRGF is to: *set standards and guidance for decision-makers at all levels to make better and more just decisions on the use of natural resources and the distribution of nature's benefits, following good governance principles, such that improved governance will enhance the contributions of ecosystems and biodiversity to equity and sustainability.* The NRGF is hosted by the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), working in close collaboration with the IUCN Secretariat and partners across the Union.

The NRGF is building on IUCN's existing work on governance and seeking innovative ways to strengthen and expand this work. Towards this end, the NRGF, led by its co-Chairs, undertook a survey to “map” existing governance-related work across IUCN global thematic and regional programmes as well as IUCN Commissions. Responses to the survey form the main basis of this report.

The objectives of this institutional mapping were to:

1. Increase awareness and understanding of current IUCN work on governance
2. Provide a basis for identifying how NRGF can build links and synergies with existing work within IUCN
3. Provide a basis for identifying key gaps and needs to inform NRGF's work, in the context of the 2017-2020 IUCN intersessional Programme
4. Identify colleagues and opportunities for dialogue and engagement

Along with these current objectives, it is hoped that this report will serve as a base of information on IUCN natural resource governance-related work that can be expanded over time.

Methods

A survey was designed to gather information on various IUCN initiatives with a significant focus on natural resources governance that are being implemented, are approved for implementation, or have been completed in the last three years. In keeping with the survey objectives, the scope of the survey included initiatives undertaken by the IUCN com-

ponent programmes mandated to implement the global intersessional IUCN Programme; that is, work conducted by IUCN global thematic and regional programmes or sponsored by IUCN Commissions. The general orientation and approach follow that of other surveys of IUCN's work on particular themes undertaken in recent years, for example on Ecosystem-based Adaptation and People in Nature.

IUCN has defined **governance** as: *the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say in the management of natural resources – including biodiversity conservation* (IUCN RESWCC3.012).

A key dimension of the mandate of NRGF – as emphasized in the IUCN 2013-2016 Programme – is to mainstream IUCN's work on rights-based approaches and social equity. To highlight these aspects of the NRGF, the co-Chairs – with inputs from the broader NRGF Working Group – developed a table of criteria for projects to use in identifying projects and initiatives that fall within the scope of this survey, and a template for entering information about specific projects, programmes or initiatives.¹

The survey was circulated to all global thematic and regional programmes and Commissions and the NRGF team received responses providing information on 72 projects.² Survey responses were supplemented by outreach to staff in some cases where the authors were aware of highly relevant natural resource governance work that had not been reported in detail, and by background information such as IUCN website text for some of the official introductory descriptions of the work of programmes and Commissions.

Certain caveats are important to keep in mind while reading this report, most of which stem from the survey methodology. Information presented here is based on self-reporting from programmes and Commissions, including identification of which projects are concerned with natural resource governance. The survey was not designed to be an assessment, and the project and programme information reported through the survey was not independently evaluated or verified. In addition, since the survey requested information only on projects and initiatives that include a significant focus on natural resource governance, it does not provide a comprehensive picture of how IUCN programme or Commission work relates to good governance standards or approaches. Moreover, since the report relies on responses provided from programmes and Commissions, there may be gaps in information where responses were not received. While in some cases connections and collaborations between regional and thematic programmes are noted, the submission

¹ The survey methodology, particularly this use of criteria and a template, draws on the methodology of a survey conducted by the Ecosystem Management Programme on Ecosystem-based Adaptation in 2013.

² The current figure for all projects is 523; these vary widely in size and scope.

of separate surveys by each programme may not provide a full picture of these types of collaborations.

The report synthesizes responses following the format of the original survey. Section 2 below provides an introduction to the work reported by responding programmes. This is followed by section 3 on Objectives, which groups the main approaches and types of work reported into a number of categories, with examples of each. Section 4 on Technical Skills/Expertise summarizes information provided on governance-related expertise and how this is accessed from internal and external sources. Section 5 summarizes the main types of results reported and highlights knowledge products likely to be particularly relevant for NRGF. Section 6 discusses Challenges and Lessons conveyed in the responses and Section 7 summarizes feedback on areas of Institutional Support required. The concluding Section 8 offers reflections on implications for the further work of the NRGF.

2. INTRODUCTION TO IUCN GOVERNANCE WORK – BY PROGRAMME AND COMMISSION

IUCN Global Thematic Programmes

Responses were received from eight of the 12 IUCN global thematic programmes.

Global Forests and Climate Change Programme (GFCCP)

GFCCP provided information on a large portfolio of governance-related projects, including projects within its three programme areas of Forest landscape restoration (FLR), Slowing the global deforestation rate (including REDD+) and Locally controlled forests. Information was provided on the following main projects and initiatives:

- IUCN support to the Forest and Farm Facility, a partnership of FAO, IIED and IUCN with a mission to “promote sustainable forest and farm management by supporting local, national, regional and international organizations and platforms for effective engagement in policies and investments that meet the needs of local people.”
- The Responsive Forest Governance Initiative, a research, training and practice programme focusing on enabling representation of rural people in decision-making and in linking research to practice and policy in Africa.
- The project Towards Pro-Poor REDD+, focused on promoting rights-based approaches to strengthen the conservation, governance and sustainable management of landscapes in Cameroon, Ghana, Guatemala, Papua Province of Indonesia and Uganda
- A related project on REDD-PLUS BENEFITS:

Facilitating countries and communities in the design of pro-poor REDD-Plus benefits schemes

- A Forest Law Enforcement and Governance project in seven countries in Eastern Europe (ENPI FLEG)
- The Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) programme, seeking to catalyze forest landscape restoration across 150 million hectares by the end of 2020.

Global Drylands Initiative (GDI)

Governance-related work shared by the Global Drylands Initiative is mainly based in grassland and pastoral systems with a focus on linking sectors and promoting learning and good practice around equity and inclusion of marginalized groups. Specific projects include:

- Closing the Gaps in Great Green Wall: Linking sectors and stakeholders for increased synergy and scale – including building capacities of local actors to influence policies on the Great Green Wall in the Sahel.
- Participatory assessment of land degradation and sustainable land management in grassland and pastoral systems

Global Water Programme (GWP)

- The Global Water Programme’s current portfolio on governance builds on its previous engagement on related issues under the Water and Nature Initiative (WANI - 2001-2012). It includes work on transboundary water governance and on influencing a major national development programme in Tanzania:
- The Building River Dialogues and Governance (BRIDGE) project focuses on building trans-boundary institutions and agreements for governance of water resources. Work is active in over 21 countries across Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
- The Sustainability and Inclusion Strategy for Growth Corridors in Africa project (SUSTAIN-Africa) aims to ensure that demand for water, land and food is met sustainably in the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania, creating the foundations for a green economy.

Global Protected Areas Programme (GPAP)

The Global Protected Areas Programme highlighted its efforts over the past decade to give substance to new concepts regarding the quality and diversity of protected area governance, including development of new governance categories for protected areas and publication of protected area governance best practice guidelines. Current main initiatives, building on this work, include:

- Conducting governance assessments using the

Protected Area Governance best practice guidelines – including assessments at the national protected areas system level in several countries, complemented in some cases by selected site-level assessments.

- Inclusion of governance criteria in the Green List – a new global standard for protected areas - including on equitable establishment of protected areas, and on equitable governance.

Global Species Programme (GSP)

The Global Species Programme provided information on two grant-giving initiatives (Save Our Species and the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme) that have applied environmental and social review systems – first using the World Bank’s standards in 2011, and then IUCN’s Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) in 2015. Through this work, the Programme has sought to embed safeguards in its grant support and test application of the ESMS.

Global Economics and Social Science Programme (GESSP)

Within GESSP, the IUCN **Global Gender office (GGO)** is responsible for developing innovative approaches and providing technical, policy development and capacity building support to ensure gender equality is central to global environmental initiatives. Key projects reported include:

- The Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) founded in 2007 by IUCN, UNDP, UNEP and WEDO to ensure climate change decision-making and initiatives at all levels are gender-responsive. The Alliance includes nearly 100 members from across UN agencies, IGOs and NGOs working at international, national and local level in accordance with a joint programme.
- A project with the Global Forest and Climate Change Programme to promote gender integration in Forest Landscape Restoration assessments, capacity, and policies.
- The Gender Equality for Climate Change Opportunities (GECCO) initiative that promotes gender-responsive REDD+, climate change gender action plans, and knowledge on gender and climate change mitigation in the energy sector.
- The Environment and Gender Information (EGI) platform that aims—through data and analysis—to convey the value of gender-responsive environmental conservation and sustainable development.
- A project with the IUCN Netherlands on the *Shared Resources, Joint Solutions* (SRJS) programme, that aims to secure water security, food security and climate resilience in 16 countries around the world.

- A project in partnership with the CBD Secretariat to integrate gender considerations into country’s national biodiversity framework (NBSAPs)

The **IUCN Social Policy Unit** within GESSP is responsible for providing advice and support to IUCN senior management, global programmes and Regional Offices on social aspects of nature conservation, in particular on indigenous peoples, rights-based approaches to conservation, community-based management of natural resources, and natural resource governance. Recent activities include commissioning a systematization of IUCN’s work on rights-based approaches – including relevant IUCN policies, implementation systems, guidelines and knowledge resources – and technical support to the Global Forest and Climate Change Programme project on RBAs to REDD+.

GESSP also played an active role in the development of the IUCN Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS). The ESMS provides procedures to check IUCN projects for potential adverse environmental and social impacts, in order to avoid or minimize negative impacts and promote positive ones. The ESMS is based on a set of principles relevant to natural resource governance such as Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment, Stakeholder Engagement; Accountability and Protecting the Needs of Vulnerable People.

Environmental Law Centre (ELC)

ELC is working in collaboration with the World Commission on Environmental Law on the Law for Sustainability initiative. This initiative has developed and tested a methodology for conducting assessments of legal frameworks for natural resource governance, as one component of NRGF’s work. The initiative has produced a series of case studies as well as a methodological framework for conducting assessments, and maintains a dedicated website. ELC continues to provide support within IUCN on legal dimensions of Rights-based Approaches to conservation, building on its 2009 publication, *Conservation with Justice: A Rights-based Approach*.

Business and Biodiversity Programme (BBP)

Governance elements feature in BBP’s work around standard setting for private sector actors (such as the Aluminum Stewardship Initiative), improving accountability of the private sector and, with CEESP, integrating social and governance dimensions within emerging approaches to “natural capital.”

IUCN Regional Programmes

Five of the eight IUCN Regional Offices, plus one operational programme (Mediterranean) provided responses to the governance survey. The paragraphs below summarize

information on the governance-related work reported by each, moving from east to west.

Regional Office for Oceania (ORO)

ORO launched a Pacific Centre for Environmental Governance (PCGE) in February 2016, which aims to serve as a knowledge and practice hub, building capacity and informing policy on environmental governance issues in the Oceania region. PCGE focuses on four programme areas: Environmental Law, Environmental and Social Policy, Natural Resources Economics; and Leadership.

At a project level, current governance-related work reported by the Region includes:

- Community-based mangrove forest rehabilitation and management in Papua New Guinea, including development of sustainable finance models and mechanisms (e.g. REDD+).
- Improving Livelihoods of Rural Communities in Fiji by Increasing Economic Benefits from Fiji's Kai Fishery by Addressing Food Safety Issues
- The BIOPAMA project on capacity building for improved protected area governance and access to biodiversity information to guide decision-making.

Regional Office for Asia (ARO)

A major regional initiative in Asia is the Mangroves for the Future initiative, which is guided by the vision of *"Healthy coastal ecosystems for a more prosperous and secure future for coastal communities."* The initiative has moved through several phases, and now focuses on enhancing coastal governance. The work includes promoting participatory natural resource management mechanisms and recognition of tenure, including gender dimensions, and strengthening national and regional capacities for integrated coastal zone management.

Other projects reported from Asia focus on community-based natural resource management: for example:

- A project on Strengthening Capacity of Fishing Communities in the Tonle Sap in Cambodia to Manage their Natural Resources Sustainably, and
- Community Based Sustainable Management of Tanguar Haor in Bangladesh

Regional Office for East and Southern Africa (ESARO)

ESARO shared information on several forest and drylands initiatives, including engagements at national policy and local levels. These include:

- ESARO implements a component of the global Towards Pro-Poor REDD+, with a focus on

promoting rights-based approaches to strengthen the conservation, governance and sustainable management of landscapes in Uganda

- Another REDD+ project, Widening Informed Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ in Kenya, works with government, civil society, indigenous peoples and local communities to broaden stakeholder engagement in REDD+ policy and activities
- The Participation for Change project works to strengthen the participation of pastoral associations in local and national policy processes, to improve food security in dryland areas of East Africa.
- Another drylands-focused project seeks to build drought resilience through land and water management in arid and semi-arid areas in Kenya and Uganda
- A project in the Embobut Forest, Cherangany Hills, Kenya is focusing on developing a road map for forest landscape and livelihood restoration through dialogue and multi-stakeholder engagement.
- A longstanding project with local communities in the Mt. Elgon region of Kenya and Uganda has recently included support for conflict resolution as well as development of payments for ecosystem service mechanisms.

Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (Med)

The IUCN-Med Centre shared information on several projects with a particular focus on protected area governance, including aspects of co-management, technical assistance in eco-tourism management and securing climate change mitigation services provided by protected areas. Projects include:

- Work with national-level actors in Morocco and Tunisia to develop improved governance systems or co management frameworks around protected areas.
- In Tunisia, this includes support to develop regulatory frameworks for co-management and setting up co-management arrangements in two protected areas.
- IUCN-Med's work on resilience (SEARCH), includes a specific focus on supporting self-organization and governance as part of efforts to enhance resilience.
- One project looks at national governance issues as they pertain to marine and coastal management, particularly by providing legal and institutional reviews of marine protected areas, fisheries, and marine spatial planning.

Regional Office for West Africa (PACO)

In West Africa, IUCN reported on its work with stakeholders at various levels to promote decentralized or commu-

nity-based management of conservation areas. In addition to site-based work in seven sites, this project is drawing lessons from the experience to inform public policies on decentralized management of natural resources in five West African countries. Another policy project focuses on informed decision-making around extractive industry activity and benefit sharing, including by building capacity on environmental and social assessments, raising awareness among stakeholder groups about existing legislation, and promoting transparency around decisions and activities. Other site-based projects include:

- Collaborative management of artisanal fisheries in Guinea Bissau, including development of participatory management plans.
- Strengthening the restoration and sustainable management of natural resources in the Inner Delta of Niger, to improve local community living conditions and adaptation to climate change

Regional Office for South America (SUR)

The IUCN- SUR office provided information on its work in the Amazon region to build collaboration and capacities among indigenous communities, local communities, protected area authorities and other key actors for co-management of two priority landscapes. A project in the Northern Andes works with communities, institutions and governments at different levels to promote platforms for dialogue, advancing strategies and strengthening public policies related to the conservation of paramo ecosystems and their ecosystem services. Through its regional implementation of the BRIDGE initiative, the office is building capacities to enhance multi-level institutional cooperation and provide technical advice and policy support to improve water and transboundary governance.

Regional Office for Mexico and the Caribbean (ORMACC)

ORMACC shared information on a range of projects focused on governance and rights-based approaches to conservation, including in relation to REDD+, protected areas, water management, forest landscape restoration and sustainable forest management. In several cases, work implemented in the region is part of global initiatives on these themes. Specific recent or ongoing projects include work to:

- Develop free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) Guidelines for REDD+ processes and integrate them into national and subnational REDD+ strategies.
- Pilot and assess pro-poor benefit-sharing mechanisms consistent with national REDD+ strategies
- Produce a map showing the overlap of indigenous peoples' territories and protected areas.
- Conduct case studies documenting the contributions

of indigenous peoples to conservation of nature, including in lands overlapping with protected areas, and use them to develop protected areas co-management guidelines and agreements.

- Promote Forest Landscape Restoration, including through capacity-building, stakeholder consultations, and identification of safeguards.
- Increase cooperation and strengthen multi-level institutions for sustainable water management in transboundary basins.

IUCN Commissions

Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy (CEESP)

The Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy contributes insights and expertise to IUCN and promotes policies and action to harmonize nature conservation with the crucial socio-economic and cultural concerns of human communities—such as livelihoods, human rights and responsibilities, human development, security, equity, and the fair and effective governance of natural resources. Key CEESP initiatives include the Natural Resource Governance Framework, focused on developing standards and guidance for assessing and improving governance of natural resources, and People in Nature, focused on improving understanding of how nature contributes to local livelihoods and well-being. CEESP maintains a set of thematic groups that bring the expertise of its members to bear on issues such as governance, equity and rights-based approaches to conservation; sustainable livelihoods; culture and conservation; indigenous peoples, local communities and protected areas, and private sector accountability.

Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM)

The Commission on Ecosystem Management provides expertise on integrated approaches to the management of natural and modified ecosystems to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. While members are mostly from natural science disciplines, CEM also has social science expertise and its work on resilience and fisheries consider governance. In 2015, CEM hosted the World Forum on Ecosystem Governance to explore alternative approaches to environmental challenges, with a focus on the impacts of globalization, climate mitigation and adaptation, new technologies, and effective means to promote interdisciplinary stakeholder involvement in management of ecosystems.

Species Survival Commission (SSC)

The SSC's major role is to provide information to IUCN on biodiversity conservation, the inherent value of species, their role in ecosystem health and functioning, the provision of ecosystem services, and their support to human

livelihoods. This information is fed into The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The Species Survival Commission co-hosts with CEESP the Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group which seeks to enhance equitable and sustainable use of wild species and their associated ecosystems. It is hosting a series of “Beyond Enforcement” workshops that explore perspectives and issues around communities, governance, incentives and sustainable use in combating wildlife crime.

World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL)

The World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) is a network of environmental law and policy experts from all regions of the world who volunteer their knowledge and services to IUCN activities. WCEL, together with the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law (AEL), which promotes university teaching and research on environmental law, has collaborated with the IUCN Environmental Law Centre on the Law for Sustainability initiative described in the ELC section, above. To further develop this work, a group of AEL lawyers is now beginning to scope out a more comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of environmental law principles from the Convention on Biological Diversity. The WCEL has also worked with CEESP on a joint Specialist Group focused on indigenous peoples, customary and environmental laws, and human rights (SPICEH). WCEL also coordinates an Access and Benefit-sharing Group with the objective to provide an international expert forum for the discussion and resolution of some of the complex challenges presented by the ABS concept and its implementation.

World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)

The mission of the World Commission on Protected Areas is to promote the establishment and effective management of a worldwide representative network of terrestrial and marine protected areas. As part of this, it has provided expertise and support to the work of IUCN’s Protected Areas Programme to develop guidance on governance of protected areas and promote recognition of multiple types of protected area governance. The WCPA Natural Solutions Specialist Group has been working to develop principles for justice and equity in the distribution of benefits from ecosystem services in protected areas. WCPA maintains a Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas, and recently established a Task Force on Protected Areas Governance to follow up recommendations from the Governance Stream of the 2014 World Parks Congress.

3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The survey requested information on objectives and activities of IUCN governance-related projects and initiatives, and from the responses it is possible to identify a number of main types or categories of relevant work in IUCN. Since categories are interrelated, many projects, according to

their descriptions, appear to contain elements of more than one; for this reason, it is difficult (and not particularly useful) to assign each project to one category or another. At the same time, the typology does indicate clusters of key orientations and approaches in IUCN’s work, and it is also possible to identify examples of projects or initiatives that illustrate them. This section describes these main types of work, provides illustrative examples, and offers some reflections on potential synergies and implications for NRGF.

Types of work

Main types of work identified here from the survey responses include those that focus on:

1. Rights-based approaches to conservation
2. Enhancing knowledge and capacities on governance in the conservation sector
3. Community-based natural resource management or co-management
4. Strengthening the role of underrepresented groups in policy and/or land-use and natural resource decision-making
5. Enhancing conservation and sustainable use, including through increased engagement of multiple stakeholders and/or attention to social concerns
6. Building institutional capacities, knowledge and/or coordination for conservation
7. Business accountability

Each type is described further below. Examples are illustrative and are not intended to portray the scope of this work.

Rights-based approaches

Rights-based Approaches to conservation (RBA) promote the integration of human rights standards and principles in conservation and sustainable development policies and practices, in order to help ensure respect for rights in all cases, and further realization of rights to the extent possible (Campese et al., 2009). IUCN has adopted a rights-based approach to conservation as an institutional policy. The RBA category in this typology is identified based on project descriptions that explicitly state objectives to implement a rights-based approach and/or that highlight a focus on promoting respect for and attention to rights, most often of indigenous peoples, local communities, and women. Main examples provided through the survey include:

- The Global Forest and Climate Change Programme project *Towards Pro-Poor REDD+* which aims to incorporate principles of Pro-poor and Rights based Approaches in national climate change mitigation

initiatives, to reduce deforestation and forest degradation while contributing to the improvement of local livelihoods for women and men.

A cluster of ORMACC projects, including regional implementation of the global Pro-Poor REDD+ project, which has focused on the design of Free, Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) guidelines for REDD+ processes, and production of a new, detailed map of indigenous territories in Central America, and how they relate to ecosystems and protected areas.

Enhancing knowledge and capacities on governance in the conservation sector

This category is based on project descriptions showing a focus on the development of methodologies, tools, research and/or training to strengthen capacities within conservation organizations and multi-lateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to address governance issues (such as gender equity, indigenous rights, or decentralization) in relation to decision-making on conservation and environmental issues. While knowledge development and capacity building are often closely linked to other objectives (such as policy reforms or field activities that promote improved resource governance), the projects themselves highlight a main focus on knowledge and capacities. Examples include:

- Global Gender Office methodologies and support to international organizations and MEAs (such as UNEP, CBD, UNCCD) to build gender capacity and develop Gender Action Plans
- The Responsive Forest Governance Initiative – which has used research and training to promote decentralization and strengthen the representation of forest-based rural people in local government decision-making.

Community-based natural resource management/co-management

This category is identified based on project descriptions that state a focus on working directly with communities to strengthen their management of natural resources critical to their livelihoods and ways of life. Projects often include a combination of biodiversity and community well-being/livelihoods objectives. Most projects with a community-based natural resource management focus work primarily at the local level, although some also contain elements of broader national or regional policy influencing on decentralized/community-based approaches. Examples from the survey include:

- A project in Papua New Guinea on community-based mangrove management, including work to strengthen both community capacities in mangrove management and capacities of national support institutions
- A project in West Africa that aims to reinforce the

capacities of community-based territorial authorities in seven sites, and share lessons to inform decentralized management approaches in five West African countries.

Strengthening the role of underrepresented groups in policy and/or land-use and natural resource decision-making

This category is identified based on project descriptions showing a primary focus on promoting the inclusion of underrepresented groups in natural resource policy or land use decision-making. This category differs from the one below in that inclusion of these groups is the project's primary focus. Many projects of this type focus at a policy level (national and/or international), while others have a more defined geographical focus at the scale of landscapes or sites. Projects often include a component of capacity building, both for underrepresented groups – to increase their ability to access decision-making spaces and articulate their concerns – and for government or international policy decision-making institutions – to increase their openness and responsiveness to inclusive decision-making.

Examples of projects and initiatives from the survey include:

- A project in East Africa to strengthen the engagement and coordination of pastoral associations in local and national policy processes, in order to promote inclusive, accountable and transparent policy formulation and implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to food security.
- Global Forest and Climate Change Programme support for the Forest and Farm Facility (managed by FAO), which provides institutional and policy support to smallholder, women, community and indigenous peoples' producer organizations for policy engagement, as well as for business and livelihoods development.

Enhancing conservation and sustainable use, including through increased engagement of underrepresented groups and/or attention to social concerns

This category is identified based on projects describing a primary focus on conservation or sustainable land use objectives that, as part of this work, seek to engage broader groups of stakeholders in decision-making and/or promote increased attention to social concerns. This category includes both policy and field-oriented projects. Examples of relevant projects include:

- A Global Drylands Initiative project to increase sustainable management in the Sahel through increased investment, inter-sectoral coordination and engagement of marginalized groups.

- An IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation project considering governance elements in its work on mitigating negative effects of climate change on the ecosystem services provided by protected areas to local people.

Building institutional capacities, knowledge and/or coordination for conservation

Another type of approach focuses on building institutions, knowledge and/or coordination for conservation and sustainable use. It differs from the previous categories in that the primary focus tends to be on government or other powerful actors, with less attention to underrepresented groups or rights issues. These initiatives often deal with complex settings requiring coordination, coherence and/or new institutions across multiple jurisdictions (e.g., transboundary settings) or with conservation issues considered to require increased political support. For example:

- The IUCN Sur initiative on building cooperation frameworks for transboundary watershed management, in collaboration with the Global Water Programme (BRIDGE project). Primary aims of the project are to build more effective water governance institutions for cooperation in transboundary river basins.
- The Forest Landscape Restoration initiative – with the objective to stimulate attention and commitment to landscape-scale ecosystem restoration among government decision-makers and investors, increased political support, national and sub-national plans, and international policy interventions

Business accountability

A final type of approach pursued by some projects is to increase the social and environmental accountability of

business. The two main projects with a primary focus on business accountability reported in survey results are:

- A Business and Biodiversity Programme project on promoting accountability in the aluminum value chain
- A PACO project to develop the capacity of civil society, communities and government and influence public policy regarding extractive industries with a particular focus on mining

Discussion

From the perspective of the particular mandate and orientation of NRGF to promote rights-based approaches to conservation, the governance related work reported by IUCN programmes and Commissions can be seen as spanning a spectrum of approaches – from initiatives that take rights-based governance as their primary focus, to those focused on integrating key elements of equitable governance (such as increased participation and/or accountability) in broader conservation initiatives, to those focused primarily on increasing natural resource management capacities or coordination among powerful actors, with limited focus on rights or equity dimensions (see Figure 1).

4. TECHNICAL TOOLS AND CAPACITIES

The NRGF questionnaire asked about governance-related standards, methodologies and tools, to identify whether particular approaches are already in widespread use within IUCN, and also to identify governance methods and tools that NRGF could further support or draw on in its work.

In addition to more general responses on methodological approaches (such as through workshops, case studies, research, networking), governance-related standards, methods or tools cited by at least two or more respondents include:

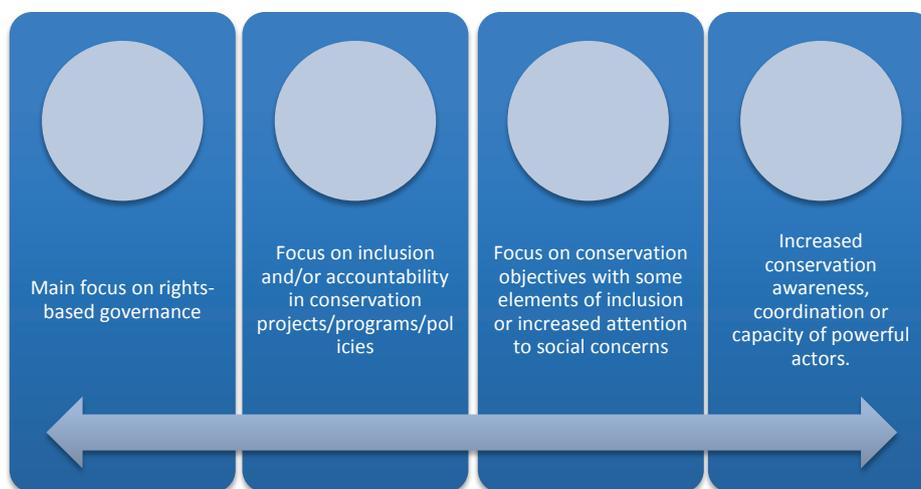


Figure 1: Spectrum of approaches

- **The Forest Poverty Toolkit:** This toolkit, developed by PROFOR and IUCN, supports data collection and analysis on the contributions of forests to local livelihoods, and builds the evidence base for how forests sustain the poor. Since the importance of forests to livelihoods is often overlooked in national policy processes such as poverty reduction strategies due to inadequate information, the toolkit also includes strategies for communication and policy engagement.
- **Action learning/Action Research:** An approach increasingly adopted within IUCN and applied to projects, which aims to iteratively improve projects or initiatives through collaborative learning and periodic analysis and revision of project activities.
- **Free, Prior, Informed, Consent (FPIC):** IUCN, as part of its ESMS, requires that FPIC be obtained for any intervention that takes place on the lands, waters, or territories of indigenous peoples; may have negative economic, social, cultural or environmental impacts on their rights, resources or livelihoods; involves the use of their traditional knowledge; or promotes the development and generation of social or economic benefits from cultural heritage sites or resources to which they have legal (including customary) rights.
- **IUCN Standard on Indigenous Peoples:** This Standard, which is also part of the ESMS, requires that IUCN projects:
 - anticipate and avoid negative economic, cultural, social and environmental impacts on indigenous peoples or, if avoidance is not possible, minimise and/or compensate for impacts;
 - take specific conditions, rights and needs of indigenous peoples – including their social, economic and cultural rights – fully into account in project planning and implementation and ensure that their social and cultural identity, customs, traditions and institutions are fully respected, including their cultural and spiritual values and perspectives on the environment;
 - optimise opportunities for providing culturally appropriate and gender inclusive benefits to indigenous peoples as agreed with them.
- **The Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM),** produced by IUCN and the World Resources Institute (WRI), provides a framework for countries to rapidly identify areas suitable for forest landscape restoration (FLR).

Other more general methodologies, or tools highlighted by one or two respondents include: legal analysis; gender

analysis and mainstreaming, and the IUCN Environment Gender Information (EGI) platform; rights-based approaches; participatory mapping; the IUCN Protected Area Standards; the IUCN Resilience Framework; CEESP Sharing Power resources and tools; the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility technical guidance on developing a Consultation and Participation Plan, and the UN-REDD Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ Readiness.

With regard to expertise and/or training of project staff, approximately (just over) half of the responses provided information about specific relevant areas of expertise, including: legal expertise, gender expertise (particularly from the IUCN GGO), advanced degrees in social science (particularly for the RFGI project), participatory approaches, CBNRM, FPIC, practical expertise (e.g., from ORMACC, 5-10 years experience working on governance projects with indigenous peoples and local communities), rights-based approaches, international water law, pro-poor approaches and rural sociology. Approximately (just under) half of the surveys gave no response, or the expertise cited was not clearly governance related.

To the question regarding whether external expertise was tapped, many of the responses responded generally that both internal/project staff expertise and external expertise contributed to the project. Where sources of external expertise were specified, these generally fell into three categories:

- Local experts in countries of implementation – such as legal, gender, ESMS and indigenous experts
- IUCN specialists located in Secretariat global programmes – such as the Gender Advisor, Social Policy Advisor, and staff of the Global Forest and Climate Change Programme
- Commission expertise – particularly from CEESP and the Commission on Ecosystem Management

Regarding safeguards, the majority of responses either stated that they did not apply specific safeguard standards, did not respond on this point, or provided responses that were not specific enough to identify a standard. Specific safeguard standards that were cited by respondents include:

- The IUCN Environmental and Social Management System
- IUCN's Standard on Indigenous Peoples
- World Bank or other donor safeguards
- Gender, REDD+, IUCN Protected Area Governance Principles and/or environmental safeguards (each mentioned by 1-2 respondents)

Discussion

These responses indicate that some specific governance-related methodologies are in use in IUCN, though

not a consistent focus on any particular ones. While of course different methods and tools are needed for different types of work, the responses indicate a potential niche for NRGF in bringing greater coherence to methods related to governance. They also show that there are useful and relevant materials developed and/or already in use by IUCN programs that NRGF can build on.

The responses also indicate a need to increase the explicit use of safeguards. Given that IUCN's updated Environmental and Social Management System has just been rolled out, this is likely to increase, though may also be an area for NRGF to highlight in awareness and/or training activities.

Comments on the report further highlighted the increase, over the last 3-5 years, in collaborations between IUCN global and regional initiatives and the GESSP and CEESP Commission to address governance issues. Examples include collaborative work to strengthen the rights-based approaches in the World Heritage Programme, gender integration in the work of the Global Forest and Climate Change Programme, and increased attention to indigenous and gender rights in the Global Drylands Initiative.

5. RESULTS AND PRODUCTS

The survey inquired about results achieved through IUCN governance-related projects and initiatives, including specific knowledge products. While a number of respondents noted that it was too early in project implementation to report results, others provided information on a range of outcomes. This section briefly characterizes the types of results reported, with some examples of each.

One type of result reported by projects and programmes was strengthened **capacities and institutions**. For example, among global thematic programmes, the Global Gender Office highlighted the increased capacity of women's organizations and networks to engage in climate policy making, programming and projects, establishment of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA), and increased capacity of the UNFCCC Secretariat to address gender concerns. Results reported from IUCN support to the Forest and Farm Facility include strengthened capacity of major regional and global forest and farm producer organizations - including the International Family Forestry Alliance (IFFA), REFACOF (le Réseau des Femmes Africaines pour la Gestion Communautaire des Forêts), the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development, the Global Alliance for Community Forestry (GACF), the Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests (AMPB), and the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forest (IAITPTF) - and the construction of regional policy agendas to defend the rights of forest and farm producers, developed through local, national and regional consultations over the course of two years. From the Responsive Governance

of Forests Initiative, results include improved understanding of natural resource governance by over 34 researchers, and increased knowledge of complex governance and accountability issues among IUCN practitioners.

Regional programmes further highlight new institutions and increased capacities and at regional, country and local levels. IUCN SUR, from its work on transboundary water governance, noted that new cooperation mechanisms for transboundary water governance have been established, along with new multi-stakeholder platforms, and that trust among stakeholders has increased. In the Pacific, Environmental Law Associations have been established and action plans developed in SI, Fiji, PNG, Vanuatu, while community members have increased their capacities mangrove nursery establishment, growth and rehabilitation through training activities.

Another prominent type of result reported is **increased participation in decision-making regarding natural resources** by multiple stakeholders at multiple levels. For example, the Global Drylands Initiative reports increased engagement of civil society, private sector and marginalized groups in implementation of the Great Green Wall resulting from its work in the Sahel. With support from the FFF, forest and farm producer organizations are participating in the decision-making platform for the Bolivian governments' Joint Mechanism for Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change. The Pro-Poor REDD+ global project and regional offices managing implementation at national levels highlighted results around the establishment of national participatory platforms for REDD+ strategy development, and increased civil society engagement and influence.

As an example of **International policy** results reported by programmes, more than 50 UNFCCC decisions integrate gender concerns, and a unique programme (the Lima Work Programme on Gender) was established. More frequently, projects report efforts to influence **national policies or programmes**. Examples of national results reported by programmes include the signing of 77 community forestry management agreements with the government in Gambia, as a result of forest and farm producer platforms advocating for community forestry, enactment of new laws and updates to forest codes stemming from the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance project in Eastern Europe, the development of gender-responsive climate change actions plans (ccGAPs) in 20 countries, and formal deliberations on a new participation scheme for protected areas in Morocco.

At **site and landscape levels**, a large number of projects reported results related to establishment of local community-based or co-management governance structures and/or plans - including from Bangladesh, West and Central Africa, Asia (Mangroves for the Future project), East Africa (in Kenya/Uganda), and Central America (for example, see Box

1 below, from one survey returned from Central America). In some cases, related land and resource tenure outcomes were also reported; for example, a project in Honduras highlighted the titling of indigenous lands in the Mosquitia as one culmination of project actions.

Programmes also shared information on a wide range of **knowledge products** generated from their work. A limited number of products highly relevant to the work of NRGF are listed here.

Highly relevant knowledge products from global thematic programmes include:

- The WCEL/ELC Law for Sustainability methodology
- The IUCN Protected Area Governance Best Practice Guidelines
- Global Gender Office publications on gender and climate change including:
 - *Training Manual on Gender and Climate Change*
 - *Roots for the Future: The Landscape and Ways Forward on Gender and Climate Change*
- The 33 working papers and two handbooks produced by the Responsible Governance of Forests Initiative –

available on the RGFI site.

- A Forest Dialogue Series, co-sponsored by IUCN, on REDD+ benefit-sharing.
- Forest and Farm Facility publications on forest producer organizations and markets on the FAO site.
- Forest 2 (FLEG): www.enpi-fleg.org - comparative governance study, 9 case studies completed by University of Michigan graduate students.
- Global Drylands Initiative monitoring and assessment method, including a holistic and practical framework of global indicators, for monitoring LD and SLM, assessing multiple benefits and monitoring trends of ecosystem services in pastoral areas comprising of grasslands and rangelands.
- Toolkits produced as part of the Water and Nature Initiative such as Negotiate, Rule and Share.

Highly relevant knowledge products reported from Regional Office Programmes include:

- ORMACC Guidance Publications on FPIC & benefit-sharing.

Box 1: Results cited from the ORMACC project on development of indigenous and community co-management of protected areas in Central America.

- Indigenous networks, groups and communities have a set of tools and platforms to promote rights with respect to sustainable co-management.
- Indigenous people have capacities to use tools or mechanisms to inform decisions on sustainable manage of territories (e.g. for drafting development plans and guides for setting up and facilitating difference governance structures.)
- Two communities in Guatemala (BosquesEl Rosario and San Luis) signed an agreement with the local government for community management of forests (96 hectares). This agreement gives access to forestry conservation incentives (PINPEP).
- Three indigenous territories (Karata, Prinzu Ahuya and Tawira) signed an inter-territorial agreement to co-manage Cayos Miskitos Biological Reserve. The process to reach agreement involved capacity building, analysis of main environmental and sustainable management issues at inter-territorial level and negotiation with subnational and indigenous government. This built a good relationship between co-management parties (indigenous territory government, subnational government, national government institutions) and also built awareness and understanding of the shared environmental and social challenges.
- Development and use of guidelines that promote good practices and cost effective co-management of protected areas by indigenous people.
- Use of maps as tools to promote equitable and sustainable governance systems in indigenous lands with respect of rights, traditions and good practices, recognizing the contribution of indigenous people in managing and conserving natural resources.

- ORMACC Central America map on the overlaps among Indigenous territories, protected areas, and natural ecosystems.
- ORMACC case studies and guidelines on co-management arrangements between indigenous peoples and protected area authorities in overlap areas.
- SUR Documents on the roles of indigenous peoples in forest conservation in two landscapes, costs/benefits of protected areas to indigenous peoples and 4 case studies of good governance practice.

6. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS

The survey requested information on challenges and lessons from IUCN's work on natural resource governance. In this section, the responses are organized to show some of the main types of challenges encountered, and lessons emerging from them, mostly in the words of the respondents (in italics).

Challenges

Several programmes highlighted challenges stemming from fundamental issues of power dynamics and rights – entrenched interests and power dynamics, lack of recognized land and resource rights, distrust and violence.

- The alarming rate of criminalization of Indigenous Peoples trying to defend their rights, and extent of violence against them.
- Getting government support for the project despite dealing with issues (e.g. modalities of forest tenure and the rights of Indigenous People) that are difficult for the government to confront.
- Strong opposition to opening participation and decision making to local stakeholders, where management of protected areas has been in the hands of the public administration.
- Increasing the power and responsibility of local community organizations without a law and policy supporting the devolution or decentralization of natural resources management and governance
- Maintaining women's engagement as stakeholders and promoting their agency in forest land restoration, in the face of limitations due to their lack of land and resource tenure/rights.
- The customary land tenure system gives less consideration for women, requiring consistent engagement to change the perception.
- Conflicts over land.

- Lack of confidence of local communities towards government initiatives and commitment to co-management.
- Internal conflicts within indigenous territories and past difficulties between their leaders and government officials, meant that governance mechanisms for REDD+ were delayed and lacked support.

Other challenges related to political shifts or instability

- Political shifts (e.g. changes in government/election cycles) have been an ongoing challenge throughout the project at both global and national level, but IUCN has made every effort to anticipate these and prepare mitigative actions.
- Political interventions especially during the campaign and election period where the discussions and targets within the governance platforms are diverted.
- The political and security crisis in Mali during the period of implementation of the project.
- Political instability at national or local scale.
- Turnover of local elected representatives.
- Political disturbances and frequent changes in government level hinder collaboration and have a negative impact on the efforts for transparency in the management of mineral resources

Challenges related to promoting or facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues and collaborations (bridging agendas and interests across multiple stakeholders) were also frequently cited:

- Challenges of encouraging partnerships among social NGOs and community groups and big NGOs.
- Governance of the project across very diverse organizational interests. The Alliance is made up of UN agencies, IGOs and NGOs from various levels; the varying needs and capacities of these organizations do not always naturally align.
- Ongoing tensions between pure conservation and accessing forest for livelihood purposes as well, including tensions among community organizations over concerns with market access versus concerns that markets provide the greatest incentive for forest destruction.
- Bringing on board diverse institutions and resource users to agree on integrated approach of resource planning and management.
- Harmonizing and influencing the approach of the different government agencies, communities and NGOs needs time and technical skills.
- Having mutual respect amongst researchers and

practitioners during project development, and ensuring trust when practitioners use research results.

Challenges related to the capacity and coordination of governments and other actors

- Limited transfer of financial and human resources to decentralized authorities.
- Institutional inertia at the regional level and poor capacity in the local administration.
- Lack of alignment between federal and jurisdictional priorities, thus affecting large scale investments in landscape restoration that require a strong political support and coordinated strategic planning from both central and local governments.
- Linking local voices to global policy forums is still tricky and representativeness of their constituency by apex organizations is not always strong.
- National forest and farm organizations often do not know global/regional organizations defending the same causes and do not feel that international policy and decisions are really relevant to them, nor impacting them.
- The programme is largely implemented through grant projects awarded to partner organizations in country. The capacity of the implementing organizations determines the quality of the outcome of the projects to a large extent.
- i) weak institutional enabling environment on benefit sharing and participatory management ii) disorganized CBOs iii) absence of credible local representatives iv) overall weak governance structures v) limited knowledge and capacities of vulnerable groups.

Practical challenges of community-based work

- Maintaining a presence on the ground and constant communication with local communities and opinion leaders/decision makers has been a big challenge.
- Working in indigenous territories demands much time and budget.
- 24/7 patrolling needed in peak illegal fishing season, IUCN had to serve as resource mechanism when local authorities failed to act.
- Hard to attribute increased fish stocks to project given confounding factors.
- The planned activities designed to generate forestry business models were adversely affected by structural problems of markets, along with lack of support by the government, which the project could not replace.

Challenges related to knowledge and learning

- While there is a high value in engaging with the research community to advance research and build the evidence base for practical work in the field, much of the research remains in inaccessible journals and is not applied to the field or co-developed with practitioners.
- Consultations and FPIC are topics with very few references in Central America, in general, indigenous peoples, local communities, and national government authorities don't know about FPIC international and national law, so it is necessary to spend a lot of time in training and dialogue.
- Cross-learning and learning consolidation and communication.
- Translation of lessons, experiences and outcomes into global knowledge and tools.
- Simplifying complex governance concepts for application in the field, in multiple languages.
- Communicating simply and succinctly the value and components of good environmental governance across all levels from communities to national governments.
- For bio-ecologists to work with economists, understand each other's language and concepts, and discuss each other's' doubts.

Lessons

Along with challenges, IUCN staff offered many reflections on lessons to take from their experiences, that could be useful for others pursuing similar work.

One persistent theme in the lessons shared was the importance of engaging and working with existing institutions. For example, it was noted that, *Traditional and cultural institutions still play a critical role in making social and economic decisions at the community level and for some communities, any governance work must recognize and directly build on them.* More generally, respondents highlighted the importance of identifying and building on existing community organizations, civil society organizations and/or multi-stakeholder platforms, and the need to engage relevant government officials and agencies from the outset. Some respondents reflected that their projects should have engaged more actively with partners from the beginning, while one noted that to know key actors and the relations between them is important to obtain the right alliances. Overall advice included that: *A key to success is initiating and building good relationships with all stakeholders, being humble and listening as your default position.*

A second key theme running through the lessons was the need for up-front analysis to understand the governance

Box 2: Challenges case example – Work of the Forest and Farm Facility in Myanmar

“One of the most useful roles for FFF to date has been providing a space for community members, NGO staff, and Forest Department members to talk about community forestry, including ways that the implementing rules and regulations and the community forestry instruction should be revised. Government is usually treated with suspicion, so opportunities to talk with government and get support from officials is unusual for community members.

CF is seen in some ethnic minority areas by civil society as a tool to undermine customary land use practices and restrict the amount of land that communities can claim under customary tenure by granting official claims to small, degraded forest areas and strengthening forest department legal claims to the rest. Many in the Forest Department would likely agree, and not see any problem with this – the forest belongs to the state, and communities should have sedentarized agriculture and only as much forest as they can “appropriately” manage. This issue has not been addressed in FFF’s programme, but if it begins to work more in upland areas, as it proposes for LIFT, the partners it works with should be carefully selected and the programme carefully designed so as not to undercut customary tenure claims just before perhaps the best chance that communities will have to assert those claims, as the new National Land Use Policy will recognize some aspects of customary tenure. The risks are higher in some areas than others, depending on relationships with the union government.

context of an area or project. For example, respondents highlighted the need to understand the context and needs of people with whom the project wants to work, the national political, social and legal context, the role of women in governance systems, local capacities, and (in the case of work on rural livelihoods) *the needs of forest markets (demand) and the capacity of companies to supply them.*

A third theme explored in the lessons was the need to build opportunities for partnerships to grow and for diverse stakeholders to share their perspectives and priorities for collaboration. In some cases, respondents reflected on how projects had facilitated or provided a catalyst for connections between government officials and communities. It was noted that: *It is rewarding to gather government departments or agencies, NGOs and local communities around a common vision and objectives. Each entity benefits from diversity and complementarity.*

Another theme running through the lessons was the importance of capacity building and support to development of local governance structures. Respondents advised on working with local actors to identifying capacity gaps and tailor capacity building as required throughout the life of the project. Capacity of local implementing partners was also a focus of lessons, including the need to ensure that partners are technically strong, have good networks in the area of implementation, and have capacity for conflict before embarking on work involving sensitive issues of governance and rights.

In relation to policy advocacy, a key lesson concerned the need to ensure that advocacy efforts are conducted with the direct engagement and commitment of local stakeholders. Policy efforts also depend on national momentum and openings, significant experience, and active networks. It was noted that community exchanges can foster awareness and engagement in advocacy efforts.

Regarding timeframes, respondents noted that governance related processes and the associated relationships and trust take time, and must be flexible and responsive to opportunities. Projects should be designed for a minimum of 4-5 years, and even the technical expertise required for governance work takes time to develop. Tangible, measurable results may only come years after the initiation of a project. As a parting word: *Be patient – it pays off.*

7. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

The survey concluded with requests for recommendations regarding types of institutional support that IUCN could provide to strengthen and enhance work on natural resource governance.

One main type of support requested by programmes was to do more to foster social learning on governance issues in IUCN, including through sharing of experiences and lessons and capacity building. For example, comments related to this point include:

- It would be extremely useful to have a basic

training available to IUCN staff on natural resource governance concepts. We conducted 2 workshops to train IUCN project staff on the concepts of accountability, participation, and local democracy, and realized that it takes a high level of expertise to do this well.

- Learning from other IUCN units on what has worked in governance would be also extremely useful.
- More networking with other IUCN programmes and Commissions.
- Sharing tools and best practices.
- Share similar experiences to learn from their successes and failures.
- Lessons learnt from similar projects.
- Provide support across the Union (and partners) for a like-minded vision of gender-responsive FLR.
- Hands on training of what the Voluntary Guidelines on Governance of Tenure (VGGTs) and access and benefit sharing mean in the field, with concrete examples.

Related to this, a number of respondents requested additional technical support, through materials as well as advice – i.e.:

- Technical advice and input from IUCN global network – also Commissions.
- Connecting with CEESP re community awareness and capacity building.
- It would be useful to provide direction to future grantees engaging with these issues by highlighting some IUCN publications / tools that can help them in their project implementation.
- Methods to incorporate gender focus on natural resource governance would be useful for future work.
- Market development support for women who engaged in Kai fishery.
- Conceptual and technical approaches help us to focus the work (papers, guides, manuals).
- Bibliography of reference.

The need for increased communication was also highlighted in some responses:

- Improving the way that projects communicate their findings, with advance tools, user friendly and linked with social media networks, would also yield great results.
- Some communication tools and video could be useful to share also.

Finally, some programmes requested increased budget support for governance-related work. While some focused on financial support for specific projects or activities, others called for approaches to budgeting that disaggregate support for governance aspects of IUCN's work – e.g.:

- Gender-responsive budgeting—i.e. allocating resources specifically to women and women's organizations and to meaningfully and intentionally advance gender equality as a powerful co-benefit to climate change adaptation and mitigation, but also to budget for the gender support needed (e.g. gender analysis, gender training, technical support, participation of women, etc.).

8. CONCLUSION

Reflections on the survey results

The following points of reflection have been drawn from this synthesis of survey responses:

- The survey received a relatively high level of response for an email survey, with most IUCN programmes returning multiple project surveys. This level of response indicates that many programmes see their work as concerned with governance in some way, and are interested to engage and contribute on governance issues.
- Survey responses indicate significant bodies of work on governance. In some areas, IUCN is playing a prominent role in advancing understanding and attention to governance issues (for example, in relation to protected areas, rights-based approaches to conservation, gender, and environmental law), even if much more remains to be done to mainstream such rights and social concerns in IUCN's work and in conservation more broadly.
- Survey responses indicate a wide range of approaches and implied understandings of natural resource governance. While not surprising, including because of the inherent complexity and diversity of governance issues, this does validate one of the objectives of establishing and maintaining the NRGF – i.e., to build more coherent and consistent approaches to governance in IUCN.
- Looking in particular at the objective to consolidate IUCN's work and approaches on rights-based approaches and social equity, the survey indicates that this rights and equity basis is not yet fully mainstreamed. There is a spectrum of approaches, some of which put rights and social equity dimensions front and center, and others which do not significantly engage with them.

- Projects and programmes often operate in challenging governance contexts and deal with a range of sensitive issues; concerted effort as well as considerable expertise is needed to improve natural resource governance in these contexts.
- IUCN programmes indicate strong interests to engage in more shared learning around natural resource governance, and to have more opportunities for training as well as increased technical support and resources.

Implications for the work of the NRGF

The results of this survey point to several implications and future directions for NRGF, in keeping with the aims of the survey to identify how NRGF can build links and synergies with existing work in IUCN, identify key gaps and needs that NRGF can help to address, and identify colleagues and opportunities for dialogue and engagement.

The NRGF developed a new strategy in 2016, comprised of four main lines of work. The definition of these four strategies was informed by the initial results emerging from this survey, and ongoing work to implement the strategies will continue to draw on survey results. Some specific implications and next steps are outlined in relation to each of the four strategies below.

1. Developing standards, methods and tools to assess natural resources governance and promote its improvement

This strategy responds to the core mandate for NRGF to create a robust set of principles, standards and tools for assessing natural resource governance and promoting its improvement. Specific actions under this strategy are to develop an integrative framework distilling key elements of effective and equitable natural resource governance, conceptual papers elucidating key elements of the framework, and a guide to support assessments using the framework. Implications from this survey include a need, on the one hand, to draw on and engage with IUCN's existing bodies of work on natural resource governance – to avoid “reinventing the wheel” – while, on the other, to build a more consistent, rights-based approach to governance across and beyond the Union and facilitate the development of relevant tools, resources and technical support. As a first step, results of this survey were used to identify programmes and colleagues to engage in the NRGF Knowledge Hub workshop at the World Conservation Congress in September 2016, which gathered inputs from IUCN programmes and Members to the NRG framework and guide, and to regional scoping activities.

2. Building a body of knowledge on governance of natural resources

A key role of the NRGF knowledge basket is to build up

a body of knowledge on natural resource governance. New work in the current phase is focusing on regional scoping activities, to identify and assess natural resource governance issues, challenges and opportunities in the Mesoamerica, Asia and East and Southern Africa regions. Regional scoping activities are building on the challenges and lessons shared through this survey by engaging IUCN Regional Offices, Members and partners in their regions. In addition, existing IUCN resources shared through this survey will contribute to a repository of knowledge resources on natural resource governance. Information on existing knowledge-building initiatives in IUCN also provides a basis for further discussions between NRGF and relevant IUCN programmes on synergies and/or issues on which additional focus may be unnecessary or duplicative.

3. Serving as a platform to promote linkages, share experience, and mobilize concerted action to improve natural resource governance

The inclusion of this NRGF strategy on promoting linkages directly reflects interests expressed through this survey and related discussions, such as the NRGF workshop with IUCN Secretariat programmes held in January 2016. Regional scoping activities are already gathering information on relevant initiatives and engaging with other actors concerned with natural resource governance issues in their regions. At the global level, this report constitutes a key first step in sharing experiences and promoting linkages on natural resource governance, and contributes to development of a platform by validating interests and needs and consolidating information on who is doing what in IUCN.

4. Promoting and supporting improved action on natural resource governance in IUCN projects and programmes

Work to promote and support improved action on governance in IUCN projects and programmes is proceeding at two levels, both of which will be informed by the results of this survey. At one level, NRGF is supporting the development and application of tools and approaches to ensure greater coherence in how governance challenges are addressed across all IUCN projects. In addition, the NRGF initiative will draw on the information provided through this survey, as well as results of regional scoping activities, to identify opportunities for high-impact projects focused on improving natural resource governance in particular contexts, as work moves into its next phase under the 2017-2020 IUCN Programme.



IUCN is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its 1,300 Member organisations and the input of some 15,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.

CEESP, the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, is an inter-disciplinary network of professionals whose mission is to act as a source of advice on the environmental, economic, social and cultural factors that affect natural resources and biological diversity and to provide guidance and support towards effective policies and practices in environmental conservation and sustainable development.

The Natural Resource Governance Framework (NRGF) is an IUCN initiative created for the purpose of providing a robust, inclusive, and credible approach to assessing and strengthening natural resource governance, at multiple levels and in diverse contexts. The NRGF is hosted by the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), working in close collaboration with the IUCN Secretariat and partners across the Union.