



Natural Resource
Governance
Framework

INITIAL DESIGN DOCUMENT FOR A NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

December 2016 – Working Paper

JENNY SPRINGER

The Natural Resource Governance Framework has been significantly revised and updated from this 2016 Initial Design Document. The revised Framework document will be published in 2019, and a summary of the revised version is included in the 'Introduction to the NRGF', available on the NRGF webpage. This Initial Design Document provides information on an earlier stage of the NRGF development process.

© 2016 International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

Reproduction of this publication for educational or other non-commercial uses is authorised without prior written permission from the copyright holder(s) provided the source is fully acknowledged.

Reproduction of this publication for resale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without prior written permission of the copyright holder(s).

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) or of the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP).

The designation of geographical entities in this paper, and the presentation of the material, do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IUCN [^{**}or other participating organisations] concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

This publication should be cited as: Springer, Jenny. 2016. *Initial Design Document for a Natural Resource Governance Framework*. NRGF Working Paper No. 1. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN and CEESP.



INITIAL DESIGN DOCUMENT FOR A NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 4

I. INTRODUCTION 5

II. COMPONENTS OF A NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK 5

1. NRG Framework Values 5
2. NRG Framework Principles 6
3. NRG Framework Criteria 10
4. Indicators 10

III. INDICATIVE NRG FRAMEWORK TABLE 11

IV. CONSIDERATIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT 11

V. CONCLUSION 12

ENDNOTES 13

Acknowledgements

This initial design document for a Natural Resource Governance Framework builds on the work of the NRGF Working Group since its inception in 2013. Participants in the IUCN World Conservation Congress NRGF Knowledge Hub session in September 2016 provided constructive comments and critiques to a First iteration of proposed Framework design elements that have substantially informed and strengthened the approach presented here. Jessica Campese provided substantive comments to an early draft and led an analysis of other governance frameworks that informed elements of the design. Comments from Nigel Dudley, Joanna Durbin, James Hardcastle, Osvaldo Mungia, Barbara Nakangu, Paul Martin, and Gretchen Walters have further strengthened the contents of this document. The document also incorporates initial feedback from the Asia and Mesoamerica scoping workshops held in December 2016. All of these comments and inputs are gratefully acknowledged.



IUCN, CEESP and authors are grateful to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) for supporting the production of this paper and the broader development of the Natural Resource Governance Framework.

I. 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 the 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 initiative 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.

As highlighted in the [2013-2016 IUCN Programme](#), which provided the mandate for the NRGF, one of the main roles of the NRGF initiative is to create a robust set of principles, standards and tools for assessing natural resource governance and promoting its improvement. Central to this is the development of a framework (the “NRG Framework”) of key elements that need to be in place for effective and equitable natural resource governance – emphasizing rights-based approaches, equity and social justice. The Framework is designed to be used as a basis for assessing the status of natural resource governance in multiple contexts. Complementary materials to the NRG Framework will include *guidance* materials on how to use the Framework to conduct assessments, and a set of *conceptual papers* to elucidate and provide a deeper understanding of key principles included in the Framework.

This brief presents some initial options for development of a NRG Framework for use in assessing natural resource governance. Framework development is building on existing work, including an initial set of Principles and Values proposed at the outset of NRGF’s work, a legal framework developed by the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law and IUCN Environmental Law Centre, IUCN’s work on protected areas governance, and relevant work of a number of other organizations. Existing natural resource governance assessment frameworks and tools provide important starting points, though tend to be more limited in their scope or applicability (e.g., to particular sectors or scales), and one aim in developing this Framework is to build both conceptual links and engagement with this related work. NRG Framework development is also taking an iterative approach, including interaction with ongoing NRGF regional scoping processes, which are exploring key natural resource governance issues and needs with IUCN programs and partners in three regions.

In this first stage of development of the Framework, this document presents working proposals on the following dimensions of a NRG Framework:

- The main components of the Framework – a framework of three to four components is outlined here
- The terminology to be used for each of the components – the terms Values, Principles, Criteria and Indicators are used here
- The content of the “Principles” component – a set of 12 Principles is proposed in this document
- The approach to Indicators – including the main categories of indicators

Section II of this Initial Design Document discusses the current working approach to each of the components in turn. Section III brings the components together into an indicative NRG Framework table. Other forward-looking considerations for NRG Framework development are outlined in Section IV, including some issues and options for consideration based on initial feedback on the design. A brief conclusion is provided in Section V. Since this Framework is a work in progress, these initial design proposals remain open for input, as Framework development continues into 2017.

II. COMPONENTS OF A NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

1. NRG Framework Values

The importance of Values as a foundation for NRGF’s work was emphasized from the start of the initiative. A values-based approach is inherent in the mandate provided to the NRGF in the IUCN Programme, calling on NRGF to build consistency and coherence in IUCN’s approaches to rights and governance. Values “imply a level of judgment about what is important” and provide “a basis for maintaining focus on the core priorities”.¹ Importantly, Values in the NRGF Framework underpin and animate all the more concrete principles, criteria, and indicators, as illustrated in the figure below.² This cross-cutting relationship aims to orient the Framework to an underlying compass of social and environmental well-being, and avoid reducing assessments to technical exercises.

The figure below also presents some initial proposals regarding Values that could be included in the NRG Framework (although Values need not be limited to these). In light of the role of NRGF in promoting and supporting a rights-based approach to conservation in IUCN, respect for human rights is proposed as one underlying Value informing all other aspects of the Framework. Other proposed Values are drawn from the initial, combined list of Principles and Values proposed at the NRGF inception

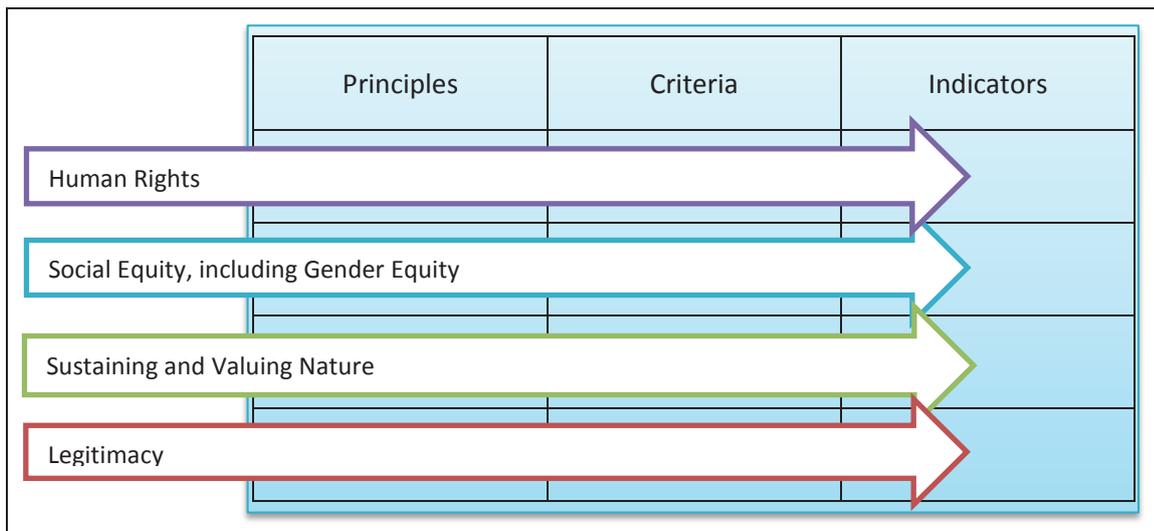


Figure 1: Cross-cutting values

meeting, and include Social Equity (including Gender Equity), Sustaining and Valuing Nature, and Legitimacy.

In general, the primary consideration in distinguishing between the elements proposed here as underlying Values, and those proposed as Principles (see following section), is that they represent high-level orientations that should guide and inform all other aspects of the Framework. A related consideration is to include as Values broader concepts that may be less amenable to assessments.

2. NRG Framework Principles

Principles are the next-level component of the NRG Framework and provide the architecture of an assessment framework within which more specific elements (such as criteria and/or indicators) can be further developed. Principles reflect “a determining characteristic or essential quality of ‘good governance’” that provide a “guiding compass” or “rule of action.”³ In light of the mandate of NRGF to support assessment and improvement of governance at multiple levels and in multiple contexts, it is important that Principles are sufficiently broad and flexible to be relevant to these multiple levels and contexts.

A set of 12 Principles is presented here as working approach. Criteria informing the identification of these Principles include that they:

- Build on existing knowledge and experience – in particular that they avoid “reinventing the wheel” and take account of existing principles and frameworks for assessing natural resource governance
- Particularly take account of and relate to other governance principles used in IUCN’s work
- Embed the NRGF Values, without repeating them

- Are comprehensive, on the one hand, and not duplicative, on the other
- Are sufficiently concrete to be assessed (with criteria and indicators), and sufficiently broad to be relevant across multiple contexts
- Include a manageable number for purposes of assessment

To build on existing frameworks, thirteen global assessment frameworks and standards focused on governance in natural resource sectors (such as forests and protected areas) were reviewed to identify the core principles or key elements that most commonly appear in them.⁴ (Across the frameworks, the terminology used for these elements varies; while summarized here as “principles,” actual terms include principles, attributes, characteristics, indicators, considerations, and themes.) While frequency was used to identify highly relevant principles, the purpose of this review was not to generate numerical rankings, but rather to understand and take account of the conclusions of other initiatives that have brought evidence and expertise to bear on the question of what constitutes good governance of natural resources.

In order to take account of and relate to other principles used within IUCN, two sets of governance principles – those included in the IUCN 2017-2020 Programme approved by IUCN Members at the 2016 World Conservation Congress, and the Principles that underpin IUCN’s work on Protected Areas Governance - were also reviewed and compared.⁵

A set of 12 working Principles for NRGF was then developed, drawing on these existing sets of principles and further taking into consideration the other criteria noted above – such as comprehensiveness, embedding without repeating the cross-cutting Values, and relevance to multiple contexts.

The following table summarizes the results of these steps. Column 1 lists, in order of frequency, the Principles that appear most commonly as elements in the other global natural resource governance frameworks; in some cases concepts closely related to the main principle identified are noted. Columns 2 and 3 list the IUCN Programme and IUCN Protected Area governance principles, respectively. The Protected Areas governance framework includes five principles as well as multiple “considerations” under each principle;

considerations are also listed as bullet points in Column 3 where relevant.

Column 4 presents the new set of 12 proposed NRG Framework principles, showing their relationship to the key principles identified in the previous columns, and further taking into account the criteria for development of NRGF principles noted above. Following the table is a brief description of each proposed NRGF Principle, to clarify the meaning of the terms used for each principle in Column 4.

Frequent Principle⁶	IUCN Programme Principles⁷	IUCN PA Principles - and Considerations⁸	Proposed NRGF Principle
1. Participation (closely related to inclusiveness)	<i>Public participation – genuine involvement in decision-making</i>	<i>Legitimacy and voice</i> (including information, a say in decisions, subsidiarity)	Inclusive decision-making
2. Accountability	<i>Accountability – for economic, social and environmental performance</i>	<i>Accountability</i> (including transparency, oversight)	Accountability – including Transparency
3. Transparency	<i>Transparency – openness in decision-making</i>	○ Transparency is a consideration under <i>Accountability</i>	○ Integrated with Accountability
4. Coordination	<i>Coherence – a consistent approach</i>		Coordination & coherence
5. Equitable Benefit-sharing		○ Financial sustainability is a consideration under <i>Performance</i>	Sustainable Resources and Livelihoods
6. Secure land and resource rights		○ Land and resource rights are a consideration under <i>Fairness and rights</i>	Secure land and resource rights
7. Rule of Law	<i>Rule of Law – fair, transparent and consistent enforcement of legal provisions at all levels.</i>	○ Rule of law is a consideration under <i>Fairness and rights</i>	Rule of law
8. Fairness	<i>Respect for human rights – interwoven with “good” environmental governance</i>	<i>Fairness and rights</i> (including rule of law, land & resource rights, indigenous rights, FPIC, equitable benefit-sharing)	[Respect for Human Rights included as a cross-cutting Value]
9. Capacity		<i>Performance</i> (including financial sustainability, capacities, resilience)	Empowerment

10. Access to Justice	<i>Access to information and justice – accurate, effective and open communication</i>	o Access to justice is a consideration under <i>Legitimacy and voice</i>	Access to justice o Access to information is included here & under Accountability
11. Attention to vulnerable groups		o Extending special support to vulnerable groups is a consideration under <i>Legitimacy and Voice</i>	Special attention to the vulnerable
12. Legitimacy		<i>Legitimacy and voice</i> (including institutions with broad acceptance)	[Legitimacy included as a cross-cutting Value]
13. Respecting/ incorporating diverse forms of knowledge		o Upholding diversity and mutual respect are considerations under <i>Legitimacy and voice</i>	Embracing diverse cultures and knowledge systems
+ (related to Coordination)	<i>Subsidiarity – decisions taken at the lowest level appropriate</i>	o Subsidiarity is a consideration under <i>Legitimacy and voice</i>	Devolution/subsidiarity
+		o <i>Direction</i> (including strategic vision, adaptive management)	Strategic Vision & Direction

The following points briefly describe each proposed NRGF Principle, to clarify terms and introduce the relevance and rationale for including each in the NRG Framework. A conceptual paper with more in-depth information and analysis will be prepared on each Framework principle as they are validated and confirmed. (Note that the sequence of Principles is adjusted from that in the table above.)

1. Inclusive decision-making – especially increasing voice and participation of youth, women, indigenous peoples and local communities

Inclusive decision-making is grounded in the principle of participation – as the most frequently recognized principle for good governance of natural resources – but aims to avoid weaker interpretations of participation by emphasizing the central role of people with particular rights and/or reliance on natural resources in decision-making. Inclusive decision-making implies a horizontal process in which power dynamics are re-balanced and the views of groups at risk of marginalization are clearly taken into account in decisions regarding natural resource governance, including through appropriate representation. While the need for inclusive decision-making is most often highlighted in relationships between local people and the state, principles of inclusive decision-making are also relevant within communities - e.g., in relation to the views and interests of women, youth, and other groups- and between local people

and businesses, NGOs and other non-state actors. Inclusive decision-making requires strong organizational representivity as well as Free, Prior, and Informed Consent where activities take place on the lands, waters or territories of indigenous peoples or other customary rights-holders, may have negative impacts on their rights, resources or livelihoods, or involves use of their traditional knowledge or cultural heritage.

2. Recognition and respect for tenure rights – especially customary, collective rights of indigenous peoples & local communities, and women’s tenure rights

Recognition and respect for land and resource rights, especially customary, collective rights, contributes strongly to effective and equitable natural resource governance by enabling local stewardship of lands and resources, providing a foundation for sustainable livelihoods, and contributing to the fulfillment of human rights and cultural survival. International frameworks such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure and UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples reflect a global consensus on the need to recognize and respect all legitimate tenure rights, including customary rights not currently protected by law and women’s tenure rights.⁹

3. Embracing diverse cultures and knowledge systems

This principle highlights the value of bringing diverse - including traditional- knowledge, practices and innovations to bear on adaptive processes of natural resource management. It also draws attention to the close links between the earth's biological diversity and its cultural and linguistic diversity ("bio-cultural diversity"), and the ways they sustain one another.¹⁰ Embracing diversity means acknowledging and supporting the multiple values that motivate women, men, indigenous peoples and local communities to engage and contribute to the stewardship of nature. A focus on diversity also promotes mutual respect among all actors and for cultural rights, in keeping with a rights-based approach.

4. Devolution – especially for community-based natural resource governance

Devolution has been defined as "a process by which state control over the use of natural resources is gradually and increasingly shared with local communities".¹¹ As used in this Framework, it is closely linked to the principle of subsidiarity, by which decisions are taken at the lowest possible level, considering fit with the social and ecological systems being governed. Devolution and subsidiarity are key elements of good governance as they enable more flexible and adaptive processes for decision-making and management of natural resources. The focus on devolution further reinforces a rights-based orientation towards vesting authority in empowered local actors, particularly where common property systems are in place. In this regard, devolution is also closely linked to empowerment¹². Devolution should take place within the context of strong legal frameworks to protect vulnerable groups and the wider environment.

5. Strategic Vision and Direction

Strategic vision is widely recognized as a core principle for good governance, as it sets the direction for mobilizing action and achieving change. In the context of the NRGF, strategic vision includes the precautionary principle against taking on risks of environmental harm, as an important component of effective natural resource governance.¹³ Strategic vision and direction should be set through inclusive processes with relevant rights-holders and stakeholders.¹⁴ Strategic vision also entails considering the wider environment and society that the governance system is located in and can impact. Adaptability, resilience, and actions to build and share knowledge are also important to ensure that strategic vision and direction are responsive to needs and changing conditions, and incorporate reflection and ongoing learning.

6. Empowerment

Empowerment is considered in this framework to mean that all actors have the capacities and support they need to contribute effectively to decision-making, claim rights, and/or meet responsibilities. This principle picks up on the elements of capacity and performance frequently found in governance frameworks, while emphasizing rights and responsibilities and overcoming power disparities, in keeping with the NRGF Values.

7. Coordination and Coherence

This principle addresses the need for actors involved in natural resource governance to come together around a coherent set of strategies and management practices. Coordination and coherence may be "vertical" where it concerns links across multiple levels of actors with some role in the governance of the same ecosystem or resource. It may be "horizontal" where it concerns collaboration and consensus across different sectors operating in or with effects on the same geographical space.

8. Sustainable Resources and Livelihoods

This proposed principle integrates a number of related concepts in natural resource governance. One is the need for a stream of resources or revenues as a basis for the financial sustainability of the people and actions required to manage and conserve natural resources. Another is equitable benefit sharing – itself a broad term encompassing ideas about the need for incentives for actions that contribute to sound natural resource governance, compensation for losses stemming from governance restrictions, and various forms of equity in how benefits are distributed among stakeholders.¹⁵

9. Social and Environmental Accountability

Accountability may be defined simply as the requirement to accept responsibility and answer for actions.¹⁶ Accountability is widely recognized as a fundamental principle for good governance, including natural resource governance, and is included in almost all the governance frameworks surveyed. Accountability in natural resource governance concerns both environmental and social impacts, and requires that structures and capacities are in place for people to hold governments, the private sector and other actors with roles and authority for natural resource governance responsible for their actions. Accountability is closely related to transparency, because open and accessible information regarding the actions of relevant authorities is so important to holding them to account.

10. Special attention to the Vulnerable

Sustaining nature and promoting equity require specific attention to how natural resource governance decisions or changes could affect environments and species that may be particularly vulnerable and people who may be marginalized in economic, social or political terms. Such attention often takes the form of social and environmental safeguards requiring specific steps to ensure that impacts are understood, avoided or minimized to the extent possible, and agreed with affected people, in accordance with human rights standards. This principle also implies a need for differentiated actions that respond to the specific situations of vulnerable groups.¹⁷

11. Rule of Law

Rule of law, in this formulation, means that both the laws (or rules) themselves and their application are fair, transparent and consistent, especially as they affect youth, women, indigenous and local communities and natural resources. In particular, rule of law requires that those with decision-making authority do not apply laws arbitrarily.¹⁸ Rule of law also implies the elimination of corruption and illegality.

12. Access to Justice on natural resource issues, including to resolve natural resource conflicts
 Access to justice concerns the ability of people to seek and obtain remedies for grievances in accordance with human rights standards.¹⁹ Access to justice may involve formal, indigenous and traditional and/or other informal judicial institutions. In the context of natural resource governance, access to justice is required to resolve conflicts over land and natural resources, as well as to prevent or remedy environmental damage.

3. NRG Framework Criteria

Criteria are conditions that need to be in place for a Principle to be fulfilled, and form the next level of specificity of the NRG Framework. Specific criteria are not proposed at this stage, pending consolidation and refinement of the Principles, and wider input and discussion on the approach to take in constructing them.

Indeed, while some initial feedback has highlighted the value of criteria in providing further guidance on what fulfillment of the principles would look like in practice, and provided suggestions of relevant criteria, others have raised concerns about the complexity introduced by multiple hierarchical levels, and recommend not including criteria as a separate layer.

If criteria are to be included, they could be developed in the following, or other, ways:

- As applications of the principle in different arenas: for example, criteria for Inclusive Decision-making could focus on assessing decision-making in policy processes and in resource management activities,

while criteria for Tenure could focus on assessing customary rights, women’s rights and rights of other groups.

- As qualitative dimensions of the principle: for example, criteria for Tenure could focus on the strength or robustness of the Tenure rights.
- The categories of indicators described below could also constitute Criteria in the framework.

4. Indicators

As defined in the World Resources Initiative Forest Governance Assessment, the term indicator “is generally used to describe a quantitative, qualitative, or descriptive attribute that, if assessed periodically, could indicate direction of change (e.g., positive or negative) in that attribute”.²⁰

To ensure the NRG Framework is flexible enough to be used in multiple contexts at multiple levels, it is proposed not to define specific Indicators at the level of this overarching NRG Framework. Instead, this overarching Framework would define categories of indicators, as well as generic indicators within each category, that can provide a foundation for development of the specific indicators most relevant to the particular assessment context. Drawing in on existing work, particularly the WCEL/ELC *Law for Sustainability Framework*²¹ and the PROFOR *Framework For Assessing And Monitoring Forest Governance*²² – both of which consider legal and policy frameworks as well as dimensions of their implementation and realization in practice – the current working approach in this Framework is to use the following three categories of indicators:

- *Legal/policy Frameworks* – this category of indicators would assess the extent to which laws/policies/rules/norms establish requirements and mechanisms for fulfillment of that governance principle.
- *Implementation: Institutions and processes* – this category of indicators assesses the extent to which institutions and processes are in place to realize that governance principle.
- *Outcomes* – this category of indicators assesses the extent to which the governance principle and criteria are realized in practice.

Based on feedback, other types of indicators that could be considered as the Framework is further developed are context indicators and behavior indicators. With regard to impact indicators, this governance framework is based on an underlying assumption that good natural resource governance contributes to positive impacts on nature and people. For example, if decision-making has been inclusive, as evidenced by relevant outcomes, then people will be more likely to abide by agreed decisions because they had a role in making them.

However, this further impact dimension is not an explicit part of what is assessed through the NRG Framework. Rather, additional analysis of the links between the status of resource governance (as assessed through the Framework) and natural resource outcomes would be required to test this assumption over time.

III. INDICATIVE NRG FRAMEWORK TABLE

The following table brings together and organizes a subset of the proposed Principles, Criteria and categories of Indicators to show how these elements can be organized to

relate to one another in a framework.

IV. CONSIDERATIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

This section summarizes a number of considerations for further discussion and input in developing this Framework, including as highlighted in initial feedback on the design.

Qualitative and quantitative assessments

The Framework can be used to conduct qualitative (narrative) assessments. Generating quantitative (numerical)

Principles	Criteria (ideas and options)	Categories of Indicators		
		Rules/Laws/ Norms	Implementation: Institutions & Processes	Outcomes
1. Inclusive decision-making - especially increasing the voice and participation of women, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full and effective participation in decision-making on NR • Empowered participation in NR management 	Extent to which relevant laws/policies/rules mandate full and effective participation in decision-making	Extent to which institutions and processes ensure full and effective participation of relevant rights-holders and stakeholders	Extent to which decision-making is inclusive in practice
2. Recognition/respect for all legitimate tenure rights - especially customary rights of indigenous peoples & local communities, and women's tenure rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customary rights • Women's rights ~~~~~ • Strength of "bundle of rights" 	Extent to which legal/policy frameworks recognize all legitimate tenure rights	Extent to which institutions and processes are in place to recognize and protect legitimate tenure rights	Extent to which legitimate tenure rights are secure in practice
3. Devolution		Extent to which legal/policy frameworks establish appropriate devolution of NR governance	Extent to which institutions and processes are in place to devolve NR governance	Extent to which devolution is realized in practice

scores also offers certain advantages to an assessment, including that it can allow for more concise communication of findings, as well as comparisons and ranking. Because Indicators and the scale of application are not fixed in this overarching Framework, options for using it for comparative analysis in its current form are limited. Assessments could generate scores for use in assessing changes in governance in a particular context over time, but would not be valid for comparisons across contexts unless the same criteria and indicators, and comparable units, are used. As a further development or application of the NRG Framework, consistent indicators and scoring scales could be developed for comparable units (such as landscapes or key biodiversity areas) as a basis for these kinds of comparative assessments.

Refining Framework components

The sections above point to a number of issues that need to be resolved or further developed regarding each of the framework components, such as whether or not to include criteria and the types and definition of indicators. Initial feedback on the proposed principles has generally been positive; at the same time, it has also been recommended to better highlight linkages and clarify distinctions across them, and to consider whether Rule of Law, in particular, may fit better as a cross-cutting Value. Other suggestions regarding Values include to distill them down to two – focused respectively on people and on nature (such as Human Rights and Sustaining and Valuing Nature) – and/or to consider the Values as outcomes (the goals the framework aims to achieve). Participants from the Mesoamerica workshop highlighted the need to emphasize issues of respect for indigenous rights, culture, and identify as the Value focused on Human Rights is further elaborated.

Use with other tools

While developed primarily for use in conducting governance-focused assessments, another option to explore is that the NRG Framework could be used in conjunction with other assessment tools that currently give insufficient attention to governance issues. The aim of this approach would be to strengthen the attention to governance dimensions in assessment processes focused on conservation or environmental objectives. Care would need to be taken to integrate both governance concepts and the NRGF assessment approach, as presented in the NRGF Guide, in these processes.

Developing a Standard

While the more flexible term and approach of a “framework” is used here, another consideration concerns whether to explicitly develop this work as a “standard” for Natural Resource Governance, in keeping with the NRGF goal to set standards and guidance for decision-makers.

This would have implications for both the content and the process. For example, while they have much in common, development of a standard implies a greater degree of specificity in the criteria and/or indicators, as well as means of verification, to ensure that consistent best practice standards are defined and can be used to measure the gap between those standards and performance in any given context. There are also international standards for the process, particularly the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards,²³ which serves as a global reference on the process for setting credible standards.

V. CONCLUSION

This document is intended to provide a foundation for a wider process of discussion and input on development of a NRG Framework. It lays out a working approach, as well as a number of issues and options that require further validation and/or relate to subsequent stages of development.

The further development of this IUCN work on natural resource governance is of critical importance. Governance processes determine both the extent to which ecosystems contribute to human well-being and the long-term prospects for successful conservation of nature. A robust framework for understanding, assessing, and improving natural resource governance is, therefore, central to the realization of IUCN’s mission.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Mohamed-Katerere, J 2013. Values - Identifying the key values and principles in designing and implementing the NRGF. CEESP NRGF Background Brief #3.
- ² See PROFOR 2011, Framework For Assessing And Monitoring Forest Governance, for an earlier illustration of this type of cross-cutting relationship, which has informed the approach taken here.
- ³ Mohamed-Katerere 2013.
- ⁴ "Frequency Analysis of Governance Principles," Excel resource prepared by Jessica Campese and Jenny Springer. Frameworks included in this analysis are those found in: Borrini-Feyerabend, G., N. Dudley, T. Jaeger, B. Lassen, N. Pathak Broome, A. Phillips and T. Sandwith (2013). Governance of Protected Areas: From understanding to action. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 20, Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. xvi + 124pp; Carol J. Pierce Colfer and Laurène Feintrenie. 2011. "A Dozen Indicators for Assessing Governance in Forested Landscapes". In Carol J. Pierce Colfer and Laurène Feintrenie (Eds). Collaborative governance of tropical landscapes. CIFOR. Earthscan, London, UK; Davis, Crystal; Goers-Williams, Lauren; Lupberger, Sarah and Daviet, Florence. (Nov) 2013. Assessing Forest Governance: The Governance of Forests Initiative Indicator Framework. World Resources Institute (WRI); Heylings, P, and M Bravo. 2007. Evaluating governance: a process for understanding how co-management is functioning, and why, in the Galapagos marine reserve. *Ocean and Coastal Management* 50: 174–208; Lockwood, Michael. 2010. Good governance for terrestrial protected areas: A framework, principles and performance outcomes. *Journal of Environmental Management* 91 (2010) 754–766; Ostrom, E. 1990. *Governing the commons: the evolution of institutions for collective action*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK; PROFOR. 2011. *Framework for Assessing and Monitoring Forest Governance*. FAO. Rome; Ratner, B.D. (2012). *Collaborative Governance Assessment*. CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems. Penang, Malaysia. Guidance Note: AAS-2012-27; REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards Version 2 (September 2012); UN-REDD. 2014. *Practical Guide to Participatory Governance Assessments for REDD+ (PGAs)*; UN-REDD. 2012. *UN-REDD Programme Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria*. Document of the UN-REDD Programme Eighth Policy Board Meeting 25-26 March 2012. Asunción, Paraguay. Document UNREDD/PB8/2012/V/1; The Access Initiative (TAI). 2008. *The Access Initiative Assessment Framework 2.0.*; Wilkie, D., Detoef, D., Wieland, M., and Cowles, P. 2015. *Guidelines for Learning and Applying the Natural Resource Governance Tool (NRGT) in Landscapes and Seascapes*. Page 55. USAID, Washington, D.C. and WCS, Bronx NY. USA.
- ⁵ The Protected Area principles were also included in the frequency analysis, and in this sense were "counted" twice, though for two distinct purposes – once as part of an effort to understand and build on existing knowledge, and in the second case to take account of other governance principles in use within IUCN.
- ⁶ "Frequency Analysis of Governance Principles," Excel resource prepared by Jessica Campese and Jenny Springer.
- ⁷ IUCN Programme 2017-2020. IUCN. Gland, Switzerland.
- ⁸ Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013.
- ⁹ FAO 2012. *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security*. FAO. Rome.
- ¹⁰ Maffi, Luisa and Ellen Woodley 2010. *Biocultural Diversity Conservation: A Global Sourcebook*. Earthscan. London and Washington, DC.
- ¹¹ Shayamsundar, Priya 2008. *Decentralization, Devolution, and Collective Action – A review of international experience*. In *Promise, Trust and Evolution Managing the Commons of South Asia*, by Rucha Ghate, Narpal Jodha, and Pranab Mukhopadhyay. Oxford University Press.
- ¹² Hamzah, Amran, Gan Joo Ee, Mohamad Rafee Majid, Nadzirah Hosen, Norhazliza Abd Halim, Nur Hasimah Baharudin, Yong Jia Yaik 2016. *NRGF Asia Scoping Report*. UTM and IUCN/CEESP.
- ¹³ Cooney, Rosie 2004. *The Precautionary Principle in Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management*. IUCN Policy and Global Change Series No. 2. IUCN.
- ¹⁴ Hamzah et al 2016.
- ¹⁵ Fauna and Flora International 2014. *Equitable Benefit-sharing: Lessons learned from REDD+ and other conservation strategies*. FFI. Cambridge.
- ¹⁶ Moore, Patricia, Thomas Greiber, and Saima Baig. 2010. *Assessing Forest Law Enforcement and Governance: Lessons from the Field*. IUCN.
- ¹⁷ Hamzah et al 2016.
- ¹⁸ Moore et al 2010
- ¹⁹ United Nations Development Programme, *Programming for Justice: Access for All: A Practitioner's Guide to Human Rights-Based Approach to Access to Justice* (Bangkok: UNDP, 2005).
- ²⁰ Davies, Crystal et al. 2013.
- ²¹ Paul Martin, Ben Boer and Lydia Slobodian (Eds.) 2016. *Framework for Assessing and Improving Law for Sustainability: A Legal Component of a Natural Resource Governance Framework*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland, in collaboration with the IUCN Environmental Law Centre, Bonn, Germany.
- ²² PROFOR 2011.
- ²³ ISEAL 2014. *Setting Social and Environmental Standards: ISEAL Code of Good Practice*. Version 6.0 – December 2014. ISEAL Alliance. London.



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.