No. 48, October 2015, Free

Forest Cover

a Global Forest Coalition newsletter on international forest policy

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About Global Forest Coalition

The Global Forest Coalition (GFC) is an international coalition of 77 NGOs and Indigenous Peoples' Organizations from 50 countries defending social justice and the rights of forest peoples in forest policies. GFC organizes joint advocacy campaigns on the need to respect the rights, role and needs of Indigenous Peoples, women and local communities in forest conservation and the need to address the underlying causes of forest loss. It's staff and collaborators work from, amongst others, Paraguay, the Netherlands, Colombia, Thailand and the UK.

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About Forest Cover

Welcome to the 48th issue of Forest Cover, newsletter of the Global Forest Coalition (GFC). Forest Cover is published four times a year. It features reports on important inter-governmental meetings by different NGOs and IPOs and a calendar of future meetings.

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Global Forest Coalition, its donors or the editors.

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Community Conservation Initiatives:

A Real, Legitimate Solution!

By ***Diego Cardona,*** chairperson of the Global Forest Coalition

Decades of international negotiations aimed at stopping climate change, deforestation and degradation of ecosystems have failed to produce positive results. Many of these measures are actually designed to maintain market interests and profits and are far removed from efforts to maintain climatic balance, conserve forests, or respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

Examples of such measures include schemes for the Payment of Environmental Services, Clean Development Mechanisms (forest plantations, hydropower) and Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+). These proposals, often emanating from international processes like the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change create new markets that commercialize natural heritage, and the millions of dollars that are invested only benefitted intermediaries, consultants and project managers. In the meanwhile forest and ecosystem loss has not ceased. Changes in weather are causing more natural disasters affecting millions, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. The underlying cause of climate change- unsustainable economies and consumerism grow unabated and are even encouraged by market-driven solutions.

This is why such measures have been referred to as false solutions and their legitimacy questioned. Many of the projects are carried out in the Global South, in indigenous peoples' and local communities' territories. Such projects entrench themselves without local endorsement, without respect for rights such as free, prior and informed consent, often times with misleading information, and, in some cases with violence and aggression. These projects therefore, are not only illegitimate but also dangerous. They diminish and exclude the role of community practices, local knowledge and cultural practices as effective solutions to tackle myriad environmental challenges we face today. Indeed, communities have learnt by experience and adapted to environments in a way that has ensured survival of both ecosystems and cultures.

We believe that community initiatives should be prioritized for conservation, restoration of ecosystems and climate balance. Note that we refer to "initiatives" rather than "alternatives" because these strategies are not alternatives- they are practical and rooted in ancestral knowledge. They have been in use by indigenous and local peoples of the territories that are

well-conserved and not alien concepts enforced as 'solutions' to crises created by other societies.

If studied in detail, the regions of the planet that are prioritized in conservation projects coincide with the territories of peoples who have lived there for centuries, with cultures and production practices that have ensured against destruction and degradation of their natural resources. It is therefore fallacious and unfair to assume that these territories should be managed according to practices derived entirely from external narratives of dominant structures of power. There are many examples of successful management of commons as well as communities that govern forests and/or territories effectively without external influences.

Peasant farmers protest against land grabbing with road blockade, Paraguay. Credit: Hugo Hooijer

Comparative analysis of satellite images of 40 protected areas and 33 community forest management area in Mexico, South America, Africa and Asia show that areas under community management presented lower annual deforestation rates than areas with an absolute protection regime under government designated Protected Areas. For example, in Brazilian Amazon the territories of indigenous peoples have lower rates of deforestation than national or regional protected areas; and Costa Rica indigenous territories have better and higher forest cover than the government designated protected areas.

It is wrong therefore, to consider that forest peoples or local communities are a threat to conservation. Policies and measures aimed at conservation must be honest in identifying the real perpetrators of degradation, deforestation and loss of territory. It is not communities who are managing exorbitant credits for purchasing machinery that will exploit oil, minerals or wood. Nor are they the ones to establish complex transport and commercialization schemes of these materials to foreign markets, or responsible for destroying thousands of square kilometers of jungle in order to establish monoculture tree plantations or raising livestock on industrial scale. They do not have the resources for it, but more important still, they have no interest in impacting and degrading the very territories that represent their life and survival.

With the above in mind, the Global Forest Coalition held the "Fostering Community Conservation Conference" in Durban from 31 August to 4 September 2015. This event gathered representatives from indigenous peoples, communities and organizations from all continents, affirming the deep and diverse meaning that their territories and natural heritage have for each of them. They were unanimous in their message: Forests should not be conserved merely due to the carbon they store but because of the life they sustain, their importance to their cultures, to biodiversity and the well-being they generate, in addition to their inherent right to exist.

It is then clear that community conserved areas are legitimate initiatives that bring about real and consistent results in the interests of conservation and human well-being. It is important that these initiatives are made more visible and strengthened to guarantee their continuity. One of the most important means is guaranteeing local communities the right to territories; but many other conditions were highlighted by the participants and can be read in more detail on our website: http://globalforestcoalition.org/es/ccri-durban/.

We invite you to continue reading and supporting community conservation efforts, efforts that translate into welfare for everyone.

"We are the Real Forest Heroes"

Message to the XIV World Forestry Congress from the Indigenous Peoples

Based on blog by ***Souparna Lahiri***, a Regional Resource Person of the Global Forest Coalition

Global Forest Coalition (GFC)'s Fostering Community Conservation Conference (31 August – 4 September) assembled together more than 100 indigenous peoples, local community members and campaigners in Durban, South Africa.

The key conclusions from the conference were: (i) sustainable use for livelihoods by local communities and their cultural practices are the main drivers of conservation and (ii) tree plantations are not forests. The clear message was that local communities are the real forest heroes.

The conference delegates conveyed this message to the World Forestry Congress (WFC) (7 – 11 September), which was held just a few days later in Durban. However, the prevailing stance of the WFC and its proceedings which were underpinned by the language of prospective investors, financial institutions and the market, failed to recognise the understandings of forests and forest communities espoused by indigenous peoples and local communities.

It is local communities that have maintained forests and guaranteed their continued existence – and their conservation efforts should be supported by global and national policy.

To read the full blog post, please see http://bit.ly/1Oqeume.

Speakers at the CCRI and CSAP conferences in Durban, 2015, during the World Forestry Congress. Credit: Ronnie Hall (GFC)

The Role of Indigenous and Community Conservation in the SDG Indicators

The 2030 Vision: "Transforming our World"

By ***Mrinalini Rai***, Global Forest Coalition

The UN Sustainable Development Summit, which took place from 25-27 September 2015 in New York, adopted the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." [1] The agenda consists of 17 Goals and 169 targets including: putting an end to global poverty, hunger and gender inequality by 2030; ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, combating climate change, promoting sustainable use of ecosystems; and peace and justice for all. [2] This is then an opportune time to formulate a global response that can foster good governance and promote human rights while striving to realize this ambitious vision.

Many existing international multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) have recognized contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities to sustainable development and biodiversity conservation. The CBD Aichi Biodiversity Target 18 is central and crosscutting, in that it recognizes traditional knowledge and innovations of indigenous peoples. It also acknowledges the integral role indigenous communities play in monitoring progress and challenges to biodiversity conservation. The CBD has also explicitly recognized the importance of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCAs), the total area of which has been estimated to be significantly larger than that of government protected areas. Community-led governance of Protected Areas like ICCAs and their contributions to biodiversity conservation should be mainstreamed further and integrated in biodiversity conservation by national governments and in other MEAs. The conservation initiatives of communities should also be strengthened by securing land tenure, restitution of community lands, and re-empowering of communities to govern and manage their own areas.

Building linkages with other MEAs for delivering Goal 15

The commitments made under the SDGs though are ambitious; the challenge lies ahead in aligning their vision with existing commitments and aspirations of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements. The task of capturing progress through indicators that appropriately assess the status of biodiversity is not an easy one. Though CBD has recognized traditional knowledge through Aichi Target 18 and has provisions of sustainable use and equitable benefit sharing, the overarching envisioning of the new 2030 Sustainable Agenda lacks that recognition. The Post-2015 process might not be completely closed for the moment as the work on developing the indicators to the Targets is still on the table, but the timeframe is closing fast. [3] In March 2015, at its forty-sixth session, the United Nations Statistical Commission created an Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), composed of member states and

Abolhassani women showing important sites and resources of the ICCA on a map. Credit: Maedeh Salimi (Cenesta)

including regional and international agencies as observers. The IAEG-SDGs will provide a proposal for a global indicator framework (and associated global and universal indicators) for the SDGs for consideration by the Statistical Commission at its forty-seventh session in March 2016. [4]

Measuring progress of the SDGs will depend on the set of indicators at national, regional and global level in all countries. In identifying and developing these indicators, insights from different knowledge systems (academic, scientific, indigenous peoples and local communities and women [5]) can enrich the process of finding inclusive and realistic solutions. For example, to understand the effects of biodiversity loss in Bale Mountains [6] in Ethiopia, GIS mapping is being used to recognize the role of Sacred Natural Sites (SNS) and traditional practices of the local communities for community conservation.

One of the indicators proposed for SDG15 on terrestrial biodiversity conservation is forest cover. While there is acknowledgement of forests playing a key role in biodiversity conservation, forest cover does not indicate conservation outcomes. The crux of the problem lies in the significant gaps regarding the forest definition, including FAO's faulty definition of forests that includes industrial tree plantations, rubber plantations, highly degraded forest, and clearcuts. If this definition is not corrected to imply natural, biodiverse forests, the expansion of 'forest cover' could actually lead to the deterioration of ecosystems where indigenous peoples' territories are grabbed, exploited, cut and reforested in the guise of plantation forests.

Alongside, the SDG indicators should also recognize community conservation, as recommended by the recently-held Fostering Community Conservation Conference [7] and by communities themselves. There needs to be global and universal shift from the generic categorization of forests to a more inclusive description that would encompass indigenous peoples and their knowledge and, respect the self-determination of communities, especially with regard to their means of subsistence.

Proper indicators for the SDGs should reflect both the quantitative and the qualitative nature of sustainable practices. The data need to be disaggregated for indigenous peoples and for gender, age, and other social factors. To stand true to the collective action pledged for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of "no one will be left behind", indigenous peoples and local communities, especially women, are essential actors in conservation and sustainable development in general and should be recognized as key partners in achieving the desired collective vision of all the goals necessary for transforming our world by 2030.

[1] Transforming our world: the 2020 Agenda for Sustainable Development. See https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld

[2] See all SDG Goals and targets at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html

[3] Ibid.16

[4] http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs Accessed October 13, 2015

[6] Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) in Ethiopia. http://globalforestcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Ethiopia-flyer.pdf

[7] See http://globalforestcoalition.org/ccri-durban/

Conservation in the Solomon Islands: Revitalizing Customary Practices to cope with Sea Level Rise

Based on reports by Aydah Vahia, Joycelyn Maenukua, and Holly Jonas

CCRI in the Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands is one of the 20 countries undertaking the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI). The communities of Fera Subua and Sulufou in Northeast Malaita, are the first in the Solomon Islands to conduct assessments of the resilience of their conservation initiatives.

The preliminary assessments are based on questionnaires, workshops and face-to-face interviews with the communities as well as a national workshop. The Network of the Indigenous Peoples-Solomons (NIPS), as a key facilitator of the CCRI process in the Solomon Islands, led the assessments and held a successful two-day capacity-building workshop in Honiara from 6th to 8th July 2015 with community participants, government representatives, civil society, donors and media.

Community conservation resilience in the Solomon Islands

Both communities have numerous traditions for conserving biodiversity. This includes preserving small streams and surrounding trees to protect the habitat and drinking water, shifting cultivation and protecting cultivated lands. There are also customs and taboos governing how to harvest and access resources in order to protect biodiversity and ensure community livelihoods.

Discussion with women of Fera Subua community during CCRI workshop. Credit: Aydah Vahia (NIPS)

Threats to community conservation resilience

Sea level rise is considered the most significant external threat to community resilience of these groups in the Solomon Islands. The negative impacts of sea level rise would impede on farming practices and is expected to force coastal communities to relocate to the mainland of Malaita. The communities have observed that the growing population and high costs of living has negatively impacted crops and led to unsustainable harvesting of marine resources and mangroves. Another threat is the discrepancies and inconsistencies in national laws relating to recognition of indigenous peoples' stewardship rights. Communities also reported that the influence of Western lifestyles has eroded community and customary governance systems, which are not recognized and respected as they were earlier.

Strengthening community conservation resilience initiatives

To remedy the declining recognition of traditional leadership and governance, communities wish to revitalise customary governance systems, including by constructing a 'custom house' for key decision-making processes and housing of cultural artefacts. Communities also called for the revitalisation of customary conservation practices and knowledge, particularly mapping land resources, traditional boundaries, and taboo sites and transferring knowledge to future generations. Importantly, women highlighted the need for further support for economic livelihoods. Both communities welcomed further workshops and assessments.

Fera Subua Island, Solomon Islands. Credit: Aydah Vahia (NIPS)

Mangroves on the mainland provide food and house-building materials for the communities of Fera Subua and Sulufou. Credit: Aydah Vahia (NIPS)

Community conservation in Russia: Defending the rights of the Indigenous Udege People of the Russian Far East

Based on reports by Anatoly Lebedev

CCRI In Russia

The Udege are one of the 48 indigenous peoples in Russia that inhabit the forests on the Sikhote-Alin Mountains in the Russian Far East. The Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) worked with the Iman, Bikin and Samarga Udege river communities.

The CCRI assessment process included regular contact with community leaders, field visits, and round table discussions with indigenous leaders of Russia and the Deputy Governor of Primorye. Furthermore, a full-day assessment and capacity building workshop for leaders of the three communities took place at the Iman municipal centre, in Novopokrovka on 27th July, which was organised by Global Forest Coalition and local Russian organisation, BROC.

Community conservation resilience in Russia

Udege communities rely on sustainable hunting and fishing practices in their traditional territories to support their livelihoods, as well as NTFP use. Women tend to be much more aware of legal details

Udege boat on Bikin. Credit: BROC

and specific problems of wildlife and salmon sustainable resource use and management and often fulfil leadership positions in communes and associations. Thus, they have equal rights to men and play a significant role in dealing with officials, regulations and documents.

Threats to community conservation resilience

A key issue that arose at the CCRI workshop was the inconsistency of the state's approach on indigenous rights: that despite a series of legal and official statements, indigenous rights, tenure and access to land has continued to be ignored, violated and diminished.

Another external threat to Udege livelihoods is the overexploitation of salmon stocks and wildlife resources by poachers, causing competition over resources. Other specific threats include, legal and illegal logging and poor road infrastructure.

Strengthening community conservation resilience initiatives

Recommendations to support community resilience and conservation include strengthening policies to prevent overexploitation of salmon stocks, involving indigenous representatives in working groups that establish fish and wildlife quotas, and addressing illegal and unsustainable logging.

Communities also recommended a training programme for young Udege on traditional resource management practices and joint-management of National Parks "Bikin" and "Udege Legend" at Iman River with effective indigenous participation. In order for such progress to occur, governmental agencies need to properly recognise, respect and support indigenous conservation practices, traditional knowledge and related privileges.

Udege hunters pray at sacred site. Credit: BROC

Fishing on Bikin River. Credit: BROC

Colours of Bikin Taiga. Credit: BROC

Community Conservation in Panama: Passing on Traditional Knowledge to the Indigenous Guna Youth

Based on reports by Coraina de la Plaza

CCRI in Panama

The Guna indigenous peoples of the Guna Yala region of Panama carried out an assessment of their community led conservation efforts as part of the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI).

A capacity-building workshop held 23rd-25th July 2015, was hosted by Ustupu community in the Usbud island in the Guna Yala Indigenous Region. The aim was to assess the threats identified to conservation of forests and biodiversity and potential strategies to strengthen community conservation resilience. Various Guna communities and a diverse range of community members attended the workshop, including the Saglas, the administrative chief, members of the Guna women's committee, and members of a local NGO.

Community conservation resilience in Guna Yala, Panama

Gunas protect their forests by protecting sacred areas, which are mainly forested and, combined with rotating or 'Nainu' agricultural systems.

Threats to community conservation resilience

The Gunas are already facing the effects of climate change; they reported changes in the wind and rain patterns, which this year resulted in damaged cornfields, and rising sea levels in recent years.

Workshop participants also expressed concern about cultural erosion, mainly among young

Attendants at the workshop including the Sagla on the left. Credit: Coraina de la Plaza (GFC)

people. This process was identified as being disruptive, undermining the application of traditional knowledge to ecosystem management, production methods and subsistence activities.

Strengthening community conservation resilience

As a result of the assessments at the two-day national workshop, the community proposed a strategy to preserve and revive the Guna culture and identity amongst the young people. They have decided to establish a pilot plot in the mainland forests where children will learn traditional management systems, how to identify species, conserve biodiversity, and strengthen their link with nature.

The community emphasised the need for a collective effort from all community members to achieve this goal. It was noted that women, in particular, have an important function in rejuvenating culture and passing on traditional knowledge to the children and their role should be recognized and enouraged.

Guna fishermen, Guna Yala, Panama. Credit: Ronnie Hall (GFC)

Hermenica knitting her Mola during the CCRI workshop. Credit: Coraina de la Plaza (GFC)

Community conservation in South Africa: Supporting community initiatives to halt poaching and the spread of invasive species

Based on reports by Philip Owen and Ashlesha Khadse

CCRI in South Africa

The Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI) is being undertaken in communities in the Mariepskop area and Houtbosloop Valley in Mpumalanga province, South Africa. As part of the CCRI, a one-day workshop was held at the Mariepskop site with fifteen community members, half of whom were women, while at the Houtbosloop Valley site, one-on-one interviews were held with community members. The workshop took place on 26th August at Mankele in the Houtbosloop Valley.

Participants at the South Africa CCRI national workshop in Mankele, Houtbosloop Valley. Credit: Philip Owen (Gea Sphere)

Community conservation resilience in South Africa

In the Houtbosloop Valley several private landowners and businesses have focused significant energy and resources on combating invasive species in grassland areas. They have founded an organisation to combat the increasing problem of wildlife poaching with wire snares. The goal of both communities is to conserve the plants, animals and water sources in their areas, which will also directly improve the quality of their lives.

Participants at the South Africa CCRI national workshop in Mankele, Houtbosloop valley.Credit: Philip Owen (Gea Sphere)

Threats to community conservation resilience

Climate change, environmental degradation, growing population, and crime were reported as common external threats to resilience of community conservation efforts and to the biodiversity in both communities.

Poaching of wild animals by gangs using wire snares, lack of waste removal and poor road maintenance services by the municipalities, and pollution of local rivers from timber plantations are prevalent threats in both areas, causing severe harm to biodiversity. Mariepskop communities face problems such as deforestation resulting from the extensive use of wood for cooking and the spread of invasive alien species as a result of timber plantations. These plantations wipe out medicinal plants and indigenous trees species that form a fundamental part of community health systems. In the Houtbosloop Valley, participants identified bush encroachment as a significant internal threat to biodiversity and grassland.

Strengthening community conservation resilience

Communities recommended developing initiatives to deal with invasive plants including by ensuring that the relevant policies of the municipalities function more efficiently. Policing and managing areas against poaching, in which communities could play a significant role, was also proposed.

Communities called for the identification and protection of high value natural areas, increased awareness and enforcement of environmental regulations, and wider community participation in natural resource management facilitated by the state, including implementation of the CCRI.

"Fostering Community Conservation Conference"

and relevance for upcoming meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity

By ***Cath Traynor*** (Natural Justice)

The "Fostering Community Conservation Conference" took place from 31st August to 4th September in Durban, South Africa. The meeting brought together over 100 participants, including over 40 representatives from indigenous peoples and local communities. Many of these representatives had conducted bottom-up, participatory assessments of the resilience of their community conservation initiatives under the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI). Assessments have been carried out in ten countries, Ethiopia, Uganda, South Africa, Russia, Iran, Panama, Chile, Paraguay, Solomon Islands and Samoa, and further assessments in at least ten additional countries are planned. The conference discussed the importance and resilience of community conservation initiatives for sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity, examined the internal and external threats faced by communities, identified possible solutions, and developed recommendations for policy makers.

Throughout the 5-day conference, regional working groups convened daily to share experiences and identify regional trends affecting community conservation; issues included identifying enabling environments for community conservation, and developing advocacy strategies based upon the preliminary findings of the CCRI assessments. Skill share sessions were also convened, such as the CCRI participatory methodology and toolkit, and the use of visual materials for outreach campaigns.

CENSAT presentation at Fostering Community Conservation Conference 2015 in Durban. Ronnie Hall (GFC)

Fostering Community Conservation Conference 2015 group photo.Ronnie Hall (GFC)

Special sessions were also held where the cross-cutting issues of gender and women's rights, and policies and laws supporting Indigenous peoples' territories and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) were discussed.

Preliminary Findings of the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative Assessments

During the conference, the community representatives and civil society partners who had undertaken CCRI assessments presented their preliminary findings. [1] Presenters shared the traditions and customs that have conserved biodiversity for generations: in the Solomon Islands this took the form of customs and taboos governing harvesting regimes of seafoods; in Ethiopia, sacred natural sites have conserved natural forests, endemic wildlife, and water sources for over ten generations; and in Iran, the indigenous knowledge of the Abolhassani nomadic tribe coupled with an innovative approach to pastoralism, which includes limited agriculture, has enabled them to survive frequent droughts.

However, these conservation initiatives are facing substantial threats. Key external threats centred around uncertain land tenure, with conflicts between formal and customary land rights and resource grabbing. Communities are often ignored in decision-making and political processes relevant to their land and natural resources. This not only undermines their livelihood and tradition but also diminishes their ability to steward their biodiversity. Neoliberal policies that promote extractive industries, industrial agriculture and monoculture tree plantations were identified as major impediments to community conservation, and the promotion of 'consumerist' lifestyles also presented new socio-economic and cultural challenges for communities.

Internal threats include a lack of interest of the youth with regards their indigenous knowledge, migration of youth to cities, failure of the broader community to appreciate the value of community conservation approaches, the overutilization of natural resources, and increased demand for land.

As part of the CCRI assessments, community members had developed initial recommendations to address their specific challenges and these were also shared at the conference.

Key recommendations to international and national policy-makers

The conference provided the opportunity for participants to develop a set of key recommendations to international and national policy-makers. [2] The most important recommendation was the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and local

communities and implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Communities also asserted the right to self-determination, promoting women's participation and leadership in policy-making, and re-empowering communities to govern, manage and protect their own areas. Other recommendations included development and implementation of national legislation to support community conservation and the legal and political empowerment of communities to ensure their full and effective participation in decision-making.

Plenary responses from delegates to the World Forestry Congress

The conference finished with an afternoon plenary discussion. Those that were in attendance included several key representatives from the XIV World Forestry Congress (WFC), which took place in Durban between 7-11th September. Ms. Tiina Vahanen (Associate Secretary-General, XIV World Forestry Congress) invited the delegates for a dialogue on critical issues such as the existing FAO definition of 'forest'. Mr. Jeffrey Campbell (Forest and Farm Facility, FAO) highlighted the importance of traditional knowledge in forest conservation, and that the relationships between communities, land and nature needs to be better acknowledged in mainstream debates on conservation. Ms. Maria Palenova (All-Russian Research Institute for Silviculture and Mechanisation of Forestry) explained how the CCRI assessments could contribute to developing better national indicators for the Global Forest Assessments to reflect the social, cultural and spiritual values of forests. Mr. Patrick Sieber (Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation) commented that coalitions, like those involved in the CCRI had an important role to play in society including in raising contentious issues. Mr. Victor Enciso (National Forestry Institute, Paraguay) highlighted the importance of working with local communities, including peasant communities, in forest policy implementation while Fiu Elisara (OLSSI, Samoa and one of the Board members of the GFC) emphasized the need to address corporate-driven trade liberalization as one of the key threats to community conservation.

Tesfaye Tola and Cath Traynor speaking at the Fostering Community Conservation Conference 2015 in Durban.Ronnie Hall (GFC)

Conference findings and outcomes were also shared at the XIV World Forestry Congress including the opening plenary on "Forests and people: Investing in a sustainable future", an official side event on "The resilience of community forest conservation initiatives in times of global change", a two-day pre-congress event on "Building momentum for action for community-based forestry, forest and farm producer organisations" and in various other WFC events.

CCRI contribution to the Convention on Biological Diversity & upcoming meetings

Ms. Viviana Figueroa (Associate Programme Officer, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)), provided the closing words of the conference. She pointed out that the CBD Aichi Biodiversity targets 11 [3] and 18 [4] can be used to promote Indigenous Peoples' and community conserved territories and areas (ICCAs). She also observed that while the recent Global Biodiversity Outlook 4 reported the target to conserve 17 per cent of terrestrial areas by 2020 is likely to be met, progress towards ensuring protected areas are managed effectively and equitably is insufficient; as are all three elements under target 18 --respecting and integrating the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities with their full and

effective participation, in the implementation of the CBD. [5]

Indeed, at the last meeting of the Conference of Parties to the CBD (COP 12), in October 2014, the need for better ways to include relevant indigenous and traditional knowledge systems and the collective actions of indigenous and local communities in support of implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 was identified. [6] The outcomes of the conference make a positive contribution to these needs, and they should be integrated in the discussions in upcoming CBD meetings, including the Ninth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 1-7 November, 2015, Montreal, Canada, as well as the Capacity-building workshops for South, Central and West Asia on achieving Aichi Biodiversity Targets 11 and 12, 16-18 November 2015, New Delhi, India. [7]

Maria Palenova, All-Russian Research Institute for Silviculture and Mechanisation of Forestry, speaking at the CCRI and CSAP conferences in Durban, 2015, during the World Forestry Congress. Ronnie Hall (GFC)

Patrick Sieber, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, speaking at the CCRI and CSAP conferences in Durban, 2015, during the World Forestry Congress. Ronnie Hall (GFC)

[1] Preliminary Findings from all countries are available on the Global Forest Coalition Conference webpage

[2] The full list of 22 recommendations is available at http://globalforestcoalition.org/ccri-durban/news-and-materials/

[3]Target 11: By 202, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes

[4] By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels

[5] See the Global Biodiversity Outlook 4 available here

[6] CBD COP Decision XII/1: Annex 1. Para (h). https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-12/cop-12-dec-01-en.pdf

[7] See List of Upcoming SCBD Meetings here

Chanlelfu community forest on a winter morning. Photo taken during Chile CCRI. Credit: Carolina Lagos (Colectivo Vientosur)