



“Our roots, our language!
Mother tongue education for our future!”

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AIPP PRESENTS

Celebrating Indigenous Languages: Insights and the way forward



On the 28th of February AIPP celebrated indigenous languages with a discussion and book launch with the theme,

“Our roots, our language!

Mother tongue education for our future!”



Speaking at the occasion were

Gam A Shimray, Secretary General, AIPP on the importance of protecting Indigenous Language in the light of IP's self-determination/inter-connectivity between Indigenous Language and self-determination.

Anabel Benjamin Bara, Member of steering committee, Global Task Force for IDIL, Asia on the Scope and Opportunities to Advocacy, Protection, Promotion and Preservation of Indigenous Languages at Global, Regional and National Levels

Mathura Bikash Tripura, Executive Director of Jabarang Kalyan Samiti, the International Mother Language Awardee 2021 on the Bangladesh Government's initiatives to protect the Languages of Indigenous Peoples in line with International Mother Language Day

Suraporn Suriyamonton, Country Representative Thailand, Pestalozzi Children's Foundation on Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education in Thailand 2007-2022, lessons learned and way forward

You can watch the event [here](#)

POINT OF VIEW

Nagas: The Artistic Communitarian Society That Has Been Unjustly Represented Through Ages



It appears that two imageries dominate the discourse on the Nagas in popular media: one, the popular hornbill festival; and two, the imagery of head hunting. If one is allowed to exaggerate a little, these imageries invoke the colonial description of the tribes as people with unalloyed pleasure for dancing, singing, drinking, sex, blood and violence. Of the two, the imagery of head hunting was arbitrarily used by the colonial officials to describe the Nagas. The usage has been so extensive that this image has become ingrained in people's perceptions and the Naga identity canvas is not complete without it. Colonial ethnographers made extensive use of head 'hunting'/ 'head-hunter' to describe the Nagas. JP Mills, TC Hudson and JH Hutton are some of these ethnographers. Contemporary works, like that of Paul Hathaway, the author of *From Head-Hunters to Church Planters*, invoke the imagery of head hunting. Also, the pronouncement of the Naga regiment, an infantry regiment of the Indian Army, is not complete without the keyword head-hunter. Now this is not to say that the Nagas have not asserted the head hunting practice. The recent Oting firing in Mon, Nagaland provoked many Nagas to argue for the head hunting practice, as a possible response to state's (mis)conduct. This repeated reference has made Lorine, a postgraduate student, say, "We have been branded as head-hunters so much that at times I feel that it has overshadowed our history and there is nothing left for us to say about our history and culture. It in a way leaves a vacuum about our history." It is from this perspective that I have engaged with people on the question of why the Nagas should not be called head-hunters because this question has been long overdue.

Read the full story [here](#).

WHY ADIVASIS CONSUME TOMATO LEAVES?



Like many species dependent on Nature's food and bounty, the Adivasis too rely on Nature and its products. Naturally, Adivasis consume and eat food resources available from forests. These foods are rich in minerals, vitamins and other nutritional elements. Moreover, they also act as ailments for various health related issues. In this article, I talk about one such natural food which is easily available and has medicinal properties. This naturally available food is Tomato. In this article, I will focus on the medicinal properties of tomato leaves and how to consume them.

The Amazing Tomato Leaves:

According to an article of NCBI, authored by Tam et al. (2021), all parts of tomatoes have antibacterial properties. The leaves, stems and fruits all have these properties. However, leaves are the most effective among these. It was concluded that tomatoes and especially their leaves were effective against infections caused by pathogenic protozoa, bacteria, and fungi (Tam et al. 2021).

In the green leaf family, tomato-green leaves are the ones filled with multiple medicinal properties. This leaf is very easy to identify and has small tomatoes hanging from it. Once these tomatoes ripen they turn into a hue of purple, making it easier to identify.

Read this interesting report [here](#).

HUMAN RIGHTS RADAR

We Will Never Forget: Remembering the Myanmar military coup a year on



We will never forget. It has been a year since the violent and illegitimate occupation of the democratically elected government by Myanmar's military junta on 1 February 2021. This was at a period when the people were at their most vulnerable, amid the COVID-19 pandemic. It was and still is a grave and utter betrayal of public will and trust, and a sheer disregard of democratic institutions and values.

In the past 365 days, we have been witnessing accounts of serious human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, criminalisation, arbitrary detentions, illegal arrests, torture, violent reprisals, and sexual and gender-based violence committed against pro-democracy activists and human rights defenders.

This junta has been fueling a humanitarian crisis that continues to impose fear, escalate violence, and destroy innocent lives throughout the country. Bombings of villages identified as centers of the opposition had resulted in killings of civilians and humanitarian workers, and had also triggered gross internal displacement of communities. The crisis continues to escalate and has spilled across its borders as thousands have fled and sought refuge in neighboring countries.

We are appalled by the junta's disregard of socio-economic and health emergencies caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as curtailing supplies of oxygen and medicines, arresting doctors and medical personnel, and leaving thousands to die without medical help.



We will always remember. The sheer tenacity, bravery and courage of LGBTIQ+ persons who were and are at the frontlines fighting for democracy, dignity, and freedom will forever be commemorated and ingrained in our collective memory. Despite repressive conditions, our LGBTIQ+ siblings have tirelessly campaigned both online and offline in pursuit of reclaiming democracy and urging for a global action to condemn military-led atrocities. We are deeply moved by various forms of creative resistance such as flash mobs, the waving of rainbow flags, the march of drag artists that had become symbols of peoples' solidarity and strength.

This military junta and their supporters have blood on their hands. We deeply regret that many have been separated from their loved ones and have lost their lives amid the struggle. Data reported by Myanmar's National Unity Government (NUG) in June 2021 revealed that at least **12 LGBTIQ+ people were shot to death**, while hundreds more were detained, arrested, and severely tortured based on their SOGIESC. Many are currently in hiding to escape retaliation.

We stand firmly in solidarity. As long as Myanmar is unfree, democracy in Southeast Asia will never move forward. We commit our continuous support for efforts to reclaim and fortify human rights, freedoms, peace and democracy in Myanmar. Human rights and freedoms, particularly of LGBTIQ+ peoples, can flourish only if the people are recognized and respected as the rightful sovereign of the country. As such, we strongly deplore the military junta as an illegitimate force that is unworthy of any recognition.

We urge the UN to step up and impose necessary sanctions and actions against the Junta. Min Aung Hlaing, the rest of the military leadership, their political allies, and their families should be made accountable for the atrocities they committed.



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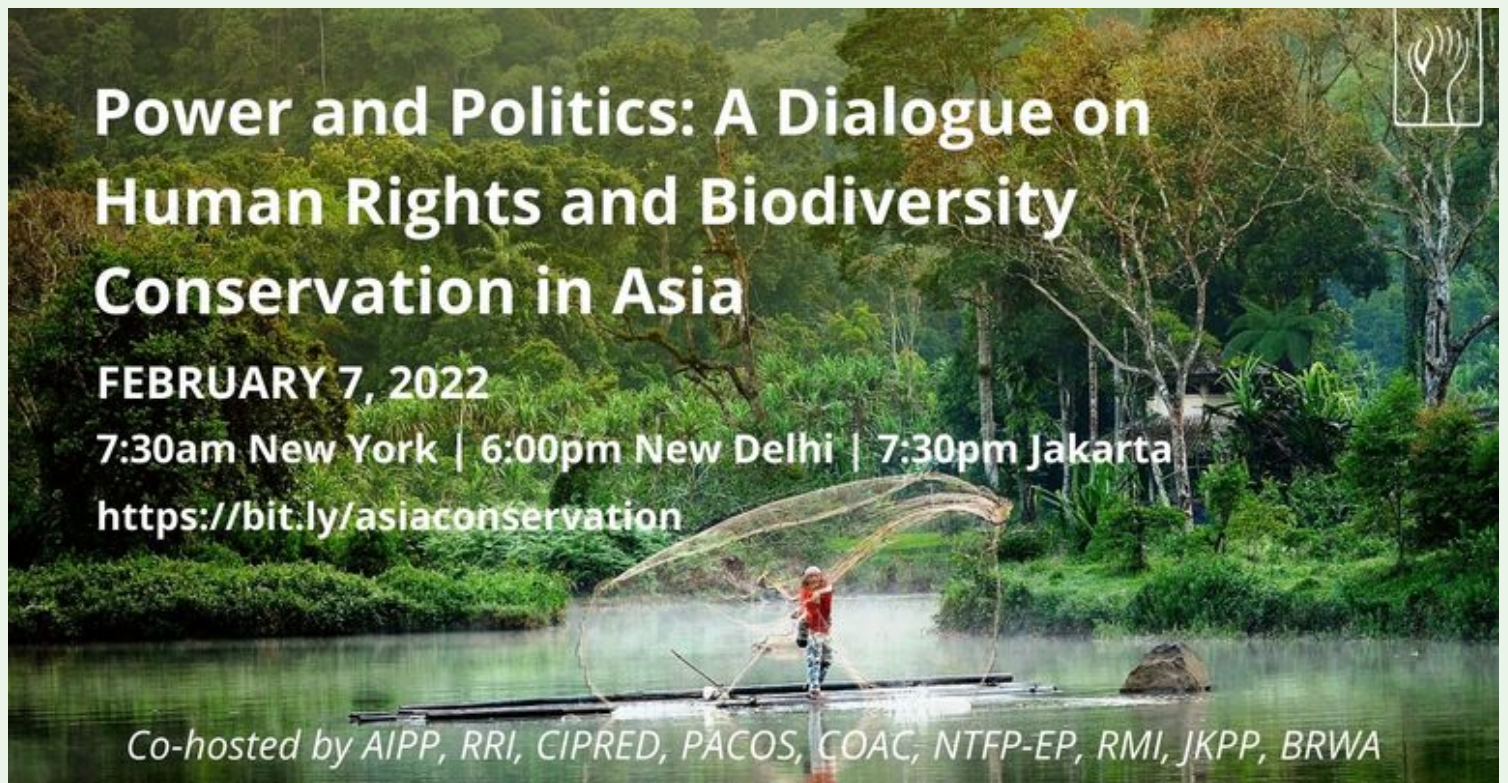
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[Click here to download the full statement](#)

CONDEMNATION OF STATE SPONSORED VIOLENCE ON UNARMED CIVILIANS IN NAGALAND, INDIA



The launch of a new report brings together data and stories from Indigenous and local communities to re-position #HumanRights and rights-based #conservation at the center of #Asia's unique political realities.

The forthcoming report, “Reconciling Conservation and Global Biodiversity Goals with Community Land Rights in Asia” is a product of an extensive collaboration between 20 Indigenous and local community organizations across Asia.

The webinar included a panel discussion with representatives from NGOs, government, and Indigenous and local community rightsholder organizations, who will share their perspectives on how to advance ongoing national movements and reforms to collectively create solutions for achieving a human rights-based conservation model in Asia.



In October 2021, government leaders from around the world initiated the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to define the future of global conservation action. It is expected that in May 2022, as the process ends, parties will adopt the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). Spatial targets, such as the ambitious 30x30 target to place 30 percent of the world's land and water under formal protection by 2030, have been the predominant empirical standard for measuring conservation success within the GBF. This simplistic take on conservation has raised serious human rights concerns within global Indigenous and local community rights discourse. In an environment where identity and territorial rights are either not recognized or ignored, spatial conservation targets are largely met with skepticism and concern by Indigenous and community leaders. Understanding how global environmental targets such as 30x30 have and continue to be developed and implemented around the world requires a critical look at the political and economic history of conservation itself. The use of spatial targets to exert power and control over rural spaces or advance public and private interests at the expense of protecting the human rights of those who bear the brunt of its costs,¹ needs to be addressed. In Asia, as of October 2021, protected areas cover circa 15.37 percent² of the region (478.5 mHa).³ Together, over one billion people either currently live in these protected areas or in areas of high importance for biodiversity conservation in the region.⁴ One hundred fifty million people live within protected areas while a further 859.2 million live in non-protected biodiverse areas covering an additional 23.8 percent of the region. ⁵ This accounts for 23.3 percent of the region's population and highlights the extent to which people and biodiversity overlap.

While exclusionary protected areas are often the most celebrated approach to meeting global conservation goals, evidence shows that when taken together, the territories and areas governed, managed, and conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities are the dominant form of conserving and sustainably governing commons.⁶ These communities invest an average of USD \$3.57 per hectare - globally representing nearly USD \$5 billion annually and equivalent to one quarter of the combined worldwide conservation spending by governments, donors, foundations, and NGOs - in the management, restoration and preservation of the natural resource systems that they rely on.⁷ This makes Indigenous Peoples and local communities conservation leaders in their own right, even as they fight for space at the decision-making table. This report argues that to effectively and equitably mitigate climate change and biodiversity loss, new conservation modalities are needed to end exclusionary approaches, embrace human rights-based strategies, and advance the recognition of the land, forest, water, and territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples⁸ and local communities⁹ who customarily own over half of the world's lands.¹⁰ We further demonstrate that the CBD Vision 2050 of harmony with nature will not be realized by excluding people from it. Instead, harmony with nature ultimately hinges on the recognition of human rights and intergenerational equity in all land-use decisions.



To achieve such ends in the post-2020 conservation agenda, future actions and investments must recognize the conservation leadership of grassroots communities and prioritize the advancement of their land rights and cultural identities as a measurement of success.¹¹ The importance of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in conservation Globally, Indigenous Peoples and local communities have long been custodians of biodiversity.¹² Their customary territories are estimated to contain 36 percent of the world's remaining intact forest landscapes¹³ and 80 percent of remaining biodiversity.¹⁴ The prevalence of biodiversity within these territories is linked to effective governance by customary rightsholders' communities.¹⁵ Global data demonstrates that Indigenous and community rightsholders' lands have lower rates of deforestation,¹⁶ store more carbon,¹⁷ and hold more biodiversity¹⁸ than lands managed by either government or private entities. According to the International Labor Organization, 476 million Indigenous Peoples—or 6.2 percent of the global population¹⁹—live in more than 90 countries. According to regional Indigenous organizations who also conduct demographic analyses, there could be as many as 411 million Indigenous Peoples in Asia alone.²⁰ This figure does not represent non-Indigenous local and traditional communities. The diversity across these societies is not effectively recognized in national laws in Asia, nor are protections adequately enforced when they do exist. The lack of legal recognition of Indigenous customary institutions and self-governance systems is underpinned by insecure tenure rights over ancestral customary territories.

According to RRI, only 8.7 percent of the region's territories held by Indigenous Peoples and local communities are legally recognized. 21 Indigenous Peoples' valuable contributions protecting biodiversity are directly linked to their plurality of world views, cosmovisions, time-tested practices, and relational values expressed through their intergenerational knowledge systems.²² Each community interacts with its local environment through a different set of rules, traditional institutions, and sustainable practices. These will be side-lined if national governments continue to favor top-down exclusionary and Western conservation modalities,²³ an extension of the colonial history of much of the region.²⁴ Even the more egalitarian IUCN-protected area categories (categories IV, V, and VI which provide avenues for resource use or management) are predominantly governed by state actors rather than the communities who customarily steward these territories. Grassroots conservation leadership is under threat. According to a 2021 technical review by major conservation organizations, over 25 percent of customary territories are now threatened by commodity-driven development globally.²⁵ Much of the carbon stored within these lands, once lost to large-scale logging, agriculture, mining, and other processes leading to forest loss and land use and land cover changes,²⁶ will not be recoverable on timescales needed for avoiding dangerous climate and biodiversity impacts.²⁷ Communities demonstrate conservation leadership through their political struggles that aim to preserve ancestral knowledge and customary institutions, enable gender-sensitive and inclusive processes, and mobilize wide-scale advocacy for reforms or laws recognizing their fundamental 10 RIGHTS + RESOURCES INITIATIVE human rights and identities.²⁸ In Asia, standing up for their rights has repeatedly endangered grassroots leaders who are disproportionately targeted by authorities and industry-linked actors for defending their rights and the integrity of their ecosystems.²⁹ Overall, the region epitomizes the type of political environment that favors businesses at the expense of human rights. Governments often use protected areas to gain strategic control over rural landscapes³⁰ while offsetting environmental exploitation elsewhere. 31 Environmental safeguards and human rights are seen as detrimental to economic development and are overlooked when business interests are favored.



These challenges have been exacerbated throughout COVID-19, even as communities continue to show immense resilience.³³ The way forward Addressing the dual climate and biodiversity crises hinges on the full recognition and security of Indigenous Peoples and local communities' rights. This recognition of rights is a means to empower agency, autonomy, traditional practices, and ancestral knowledge that are central to their adaptive environmental contributions.³⁴ Promoting Indigenous and community governance over biodiverse lands will cost a fraction of the financial burden of mainstream approaches. Indigenous Peoples and local communities are already actively involved in conserving their ancestral and traditional territories, making both direct and in-kind investments in the management, restoration, and preservation of natural resource systems that they and others depend on.³⁵ The notional cost of resettling and compensating communities, and replacing existing community conservation practices in the event of displacement, could be anywhere between 100 to more than 1,000 times the cost of recognizing their tenure rights, which is estimated to cost USD \$312.6 million in India, USD \$200 million in Indonesia, and USD \$23.1 million in Nepal. ³⁶ While a range of safeguards have been developed to ensure that conservation actors respect the land and resource rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, the world lacks a common set of globally recognized principles grounded in international human rights laws and developed in collaboration with rightsholders themselves. One key remedy may be adapting the Land Rights Standard (Annex 1)³⁷ for conservation efforts. The Land Rights Standard provides clear and actionable best practices for recognizing and respecting Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' land and resource rights in landscape restoration, management, conservation, climate action, and development projects and programs.

Click on the link below to download the full report

<https://rightsandresources.org/wp-content/uploads/Asia-Conservation-Report.pdf>



Santal Indigenous Peoples including Bengali people of Bagda farm area of Gaibandha district in Bangladesh have been struggling to get back their ancestral lands. They had been forcibly evicted in 2016 by Rangpur Sugar Mill LTD and after that already they have returned back to their lands and still struggling to survive. They are surviving there without electricity, water, health, education, nutrition and social security services. Always they stay with fear if again face any attacks like last time. Moreover, recently one news made them very unhappy and worried when they heard a master plan has been drawn by the Government to set up an Export Processing Zone (EPZ) over this Sahebganj-Bagda farm in Gaibandha District without following any free, prior and informed consent with local Indigenous Peoples.

The local Santal people say- “they are ready to give more blood if needed for their lands but not ready to leave these ancestral lands at any cost.” Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)’s representatives Chandra Tripura and Shohel Hajong and Kapaeeng Foundation’s representative Khokon Suiten Murmu have visited the Bagda Farm area on 23rd January 2022 and talked with community people.

On 6th November 2016, a sudden attack was carried out upon indigenous people and Bengali farmers at Shahebganj Bagda farm of Rangpur Sugar Mills in Gobindaganj upazila under Gaibandha district by police, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and local goons hired by Rangpur sugar mills authority & influential local politicians. Three Santal men-Shyamal Hembram, Mangal Mardi, Ramesh Tudu were killed in this attack. At that time, injured more than 30 people and evicted almost 1200 Santal families in the name of restoring 1842.30 acres of farmland. Five years have passed since the incident yet Santal get justice.

Photos: Chandra, Khokon & Shohel

GENDER LENS

How the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Asia's indigenous women



Lockdown measures and restrictive policies in the wake of COVID-19 have led to shrinkage of livelihood options for indigenous women and severely affected household food security. Restrictions have prevented Indigenous women in Asia from gathering traditional medicines and foods. AIPP's Indigenous Women's Programme Coordinator writes on the situation.

There are approximately 410 million indigenous people in the world. They, together account for about 5 per cent of the global population. There are 260 million indigenous people in Asia, with 2,000 distinct civilizations and languages. The majority of indigenous peoples in Asia have experienced historical suppression, marginalization, socio-economic and political discrimination.

In some cases, the indigenous people lack legal or constitutional recognition. Indigenous people are generally poor and constitute majority section of the informal work force. Existing policies limits their access to social protection benefits and deny them full and effective participation in society. Their rights as indigenous peoples are repeatedly violated and there is hardly any respect to their collectivism, self-governance, identities and culture. Incursions into their lands in most Asian nations in the name of 'development' have expelled them from their ancestral lands and territories and deprived them of their resources.

Click on the link below for the full story

<https://tinyurl.com/2x7jx6e8>

Indigenous Women and in the context of climate change

Virtual side event within the
framework of CSW66:

Advancing Indigenous Women's knowledge and rights in combating the climate crisis



March 10th 2022
from 8-10am EST.

Interpretation available:
English, French & Spanish



FIMI



IWGIA



AIPP



“Indigenous women carry the knowledge of their ancestors while also leading their communities into a resilient future. When indigenous women engage, climate policies and actions at every level benefit from their holistic, nature-focused knowledge and leadership,” said UN Climate Change Executive Secretary, Patricia Espinosa. As former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, explained in a recent interview: “Indigenous women help protect the fragile territories in which they live. Indigenous women are crucial transmitters of knowledge related to sustainable environmental management to future generations.”

Join our conversation where the voices of Indigenous Women, from regions around the globe, and key stakeholders will highlight the lessons learned and best practices needed to achieve gender equality and empowerment in the context of climate change.

Sign up here: <https://cutt.ly/QO7aD3U>

#BREAKTHEBIAS - WOMEN LEADER IN WATER GOVERNANCE

#BreaktheBias
PROFILES OF WOMEN LEADERS IN WATER GOVERNANCE

INDIA
Dipamoni Saikia
Mayuri Phukan
Jashuda Deori
Bornali Taid
Romisha Khatun
Suman Verma
Ritu Priya
Mamuni Rabha

NEPAL
Tanuja Joshi
Keshari Tiwari
Bhawana Khadka
Mina Chand
Janaki Bohara
Kabita Sunar

BANGLADESH
Ferdoushi Akter
Taiba Jahan Keya
Sahika Ahmed
Farzana Akter Tusi
Srabon rani
Najma Begum
Monira Akter Moni
Kazi Farha Farzana Suih

MYANMAR
Mercy
Nang Wah Nu
Mia
Yu Yu Htay

MALAYSIA
Wanitchaya Kanthayuang

LAOS
Ms. Kaysone
Ms. Noy
Khamla Keovongphee
Malina Lopaying

THAILAND
Sor.Rattanamane
Phairin Sohsai
Mueda Nawanat

VIETNAM
Nguyen Ngoc Linh
Luong Thi Truong

Australian Aid
Sverige
AIPP
INTERNATIONAL RIVERS
OXFAM

[#BreaktheBias](#) is the theme of this year's International Women's Day, 8th March 2022. The upcoming workshop would highlight three different contexts in which women have overcome barriers in their everyday living conditions and are their capability to break the normative biases that hinders their choices for a dignified living. Women-in-Water leadership is the core idea based on which Oxfam's two regional programs namely Transboundary Rivers of South Asia ([TROSA](#)) and [Mekong Water Governance-IP2](#) have collaborated with [Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact \(AIPP\)](#) to discuss the powerful life stories of women from Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM), Salween, the 3s basin (Sekong, Sesan and Sre Pok rivers) and Mekong basin from India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam countries.

This session will highlight the key roles played by women in their respective contexts, approaches they adopted to challenge the gender stereotypes and solutions employed for joining the [#GenerationEquality](#) March. Key areas of discussions entail how did these women breakthrough the barriers/bias to reach to transformative structural change through:

- beyond participating but toward decision making and leadership,
- creating and be part of the transformative norms towards the equality roles of women
- building strong network for women to voice out and execute collective actions

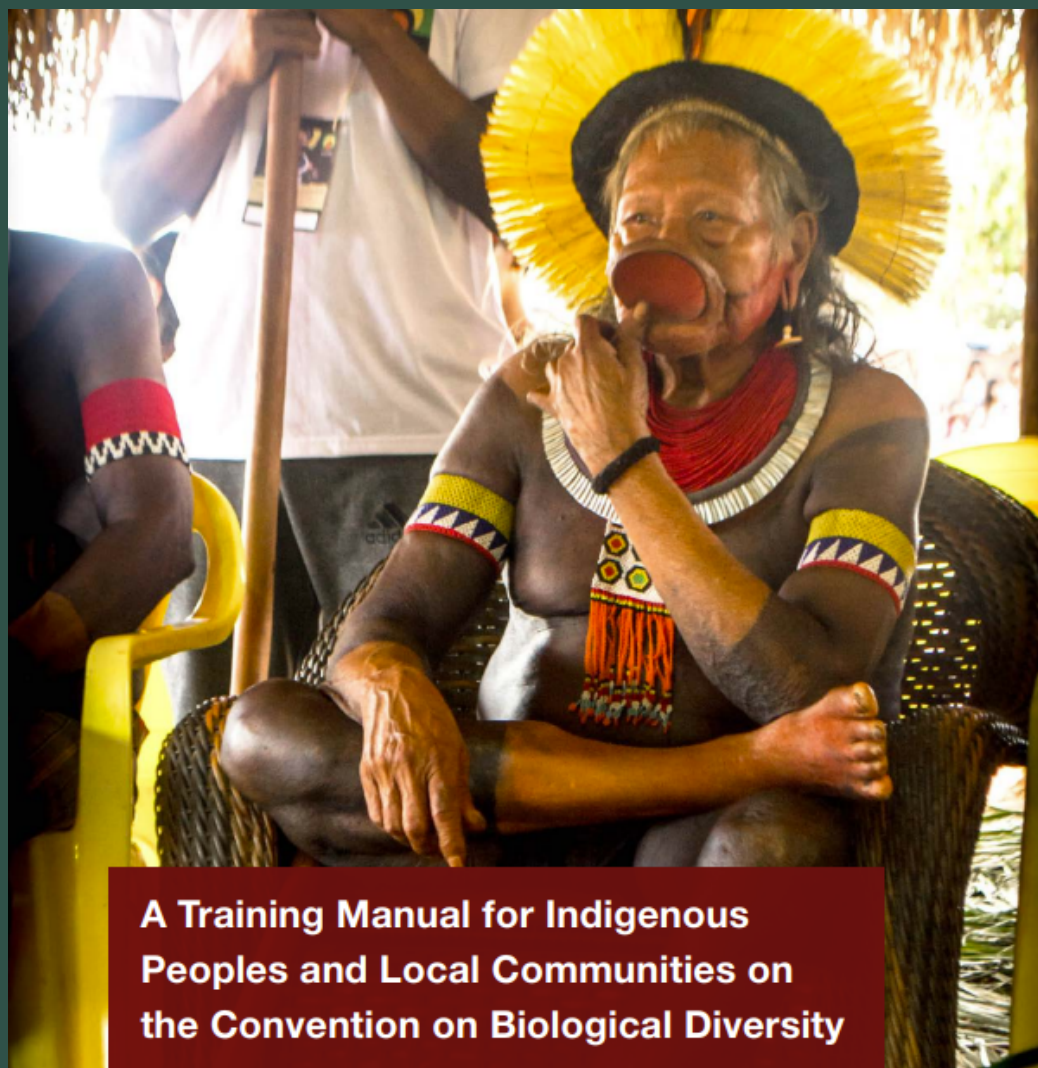
Date

8th March (International Women's Day), 2022

Registration link: <https://tinyurl.com/bdfwdc2t>

CLIMATE WATCH

A Training Manual for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities on the Convention on Biological Diversity.



A Training Manual for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities on the Convention on Biological Diversity

MODULE 1



Japan
Biodiversity
Fund



Forest
Peoples
Programme



UN
environment
programme



Convention on
Biological Diversity

The Training Manual for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities on the Convention on Biological Diversity is based on the training of trainers approach, & is intended to engage trainers, at the local level, in coaching new trainers for delivering and presenting the Convention's work related to Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

It addresses topics including an introduction to the Convention and its Protocols, key Articles of the Convention related to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use of biodiversity.

Why is biological diversity important for indigenous peoples and local communities? Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) live in areas that overlap with zones high in biodiversity. These high biodiversity areas often are also rich in cultural diversity, as evidenced by the diversification of languages spoken in these areas. Considering this overlap, decisions concerning biodiversity may impact their lives. Strong knowledge about the international and national regulation and policy on biodiversity is important to enhance the full and effective participation of IPLCs in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at all levels. The IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services emphasizes that “At least a quarter of the global land area is traditionally owned, managed, used or occupied by indigenous peoples. These areas include approximately 35 per cent of the area that is formally protected and approximately 35 per cent of all remaining terrestrial areas with very low intervention”. What is biological diversity? The Convention defines biological diversity as the variability among living organisms—from all sources, including among others, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part. Biodiversity includes the diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems.³ Some IPLCs understand biological diversity as the variety of all life forms (plants, animals, ecosystems, and humans) on this planet, from genetic diversity to ecosystem diversity. Biodiversity, for them, can also embody and reflect their spiritual well-being. For example, the Guna people of Panama understand “Napguana” (Mother Earth) to signify biological diversity. Meanwhile, in the Andean region, “Pachamama” (Mother Earth) designates the entire environment. What is traditional knowledge? Traditional Knowledge (TK) refers to the knowledge, innovations, and practices of IPLCs, developed from experience gained over the centuries and adapted to the local culture and environment. TK is transmitted orally from generation to generation. It tends to be collectively owned and takes the form of stories, songs, cultural expressions, proverbs, values, beliefs, rituals, community laws, local language, and agricultural practices including selective breeding of plant species and animal. Sometimes it is referred to as an oral tradition for it is practiced, sung, danced, painted, carved, chanted and performed down through millennia. Traditional knowledge is often practical in nature, particularly in such fields as agriculture, fisheries, health, horticulture, forestry and environmental management.

These are some of questions answered in the training manual.
Please click to download the full version [here](#)

India's ghost plantations in which millions of rupees have been sunk



A massive government programme seeks to plant trees to make up for loss of forests and to act as carbon sinks. But many of these plantations simply don't exist. The village of Ladkhan Nayagaon lies along National Highway 15 in Rajasthan's Bikaner district, on the road between the town of Kolayat and the city of Jaisalmer. A patch of trees lines one side of the road, dense enough to obscure what lies behind it. In government records, the land behind the trees has been allocated to "compensatory afforestation" – specifically, the Rajasthan forest department is supposed to have planted trees here to compensate for the felling of trees elsewhere for development projects. Records state that here, trees have been planted over a four-hectare patch, at a cost of Rs 5.23 lakh, to make up for forest lost to an electricity transmission line. In late December 2021, I visited the area, and crossed the patch of trees by the road to see what lay behind. I found a largely barren expanse pockmarked with pits, each about four or five feet deep – signs of sand mining. There were some patches of an invasive shrub, but barely any trees visible, let alone an entire forested patch. The missing forested land was a fitting symbol for the state of India's compensatory afforestation programme.

Compensatory afforestation has been touted by the environment ministry for over two decades now as a solution to the loss of forests to development activity. The idea emerged in 1986, as a rule framed under the Forest Conservation Act of 1980. Under the act, any entity that seeks to break forest ground and fell trees, whether for a coal mine or an industrial complex, must first acquire permission, or “forest clearance”, from the environment ministry. The project proponent must then pay the government for the plantation of trees in another area – what is referred to as compensatory afforestation. (If the company is privately owned, it may also need to acquire the land in question and transfer it to the forest department.)

But in the two decades since the idea first emerged, compensatory afforestation has proven to be an utter failure. Ladkhan Nayagaon, where supposedly afforested land lies barren, isn't an exception, as Scroll.in found in a months-long investigation that combined on-ground reporting with data analysis and Right to Information applications. For one, information obtained through RTI filings revealed that the Central environment ministry itself doubts the accuracy of data recorded by state forest departments for around three-quarters of the plantations. Two, our examination of 2,000 files from six states and one union territory, uploaded to e-Green Watch, the ministry's website for afforestation projects, threw up several instances where there was no sign of plantation activity. In the more outlandish instances, supposedly afforested land corresponded to absurd locations on the map, such as the middle of the Arabian Sea. Three, visits to plantation sites in two states confirmed the worst of our suspicions: like in Ladkhan Nayagaon, many plantations that exist on paper are simply missing on the ground.

This suggests a colossal waste of public funds – the Central government spent around Rs 59,000 crore between 2009 and 2020 on compensatory afforestation. But it also casts under doubt India's commitments to international environmental laws, like the United Nations conventions on climate change and land degradation.

Please click on the story link to read the full report

<https://tinyurl.com/mrn87hvj>



Indigenous food systems can provide game-changing solutions for humankind



Humanity has developed incredible technologies and processes to produce enough food on the planet to feed the entire population. From the Green Revolution to the digitalization of agriculture, the technologies developed have aimed to boost food production across the globe. Yet, the release of the 2021 “State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World” report highlighted a series of important challenges related to the achievement of zero hunger worldwide, also one of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

Over the past four years, food insecurity has been growing instead of decreasing, and the number of those hungry has gone up. Food waste continues to be an unresolved matter with an estimated 931 million metric tons of food thrown away in 2019, according to the latest U.N. report on the matter.

More importantly, even though technology has enabled humanity to come up with intensive monocropping systems that result in large food produce, there is a major unresolved matter in front of us. Climate change is displacing millions of people across the globe, pushing people into situations of vulnerability and food insecurity. Even though more research is needed, practitioners are realizing that while we are pulling millions of people out of poverty and hunger, millions of others are being pushed by climate change into vulnerability and food insecurity.

Read the full commentary [here](#)

