

GEF Small Grants Programme

Global Support Initiative for Indigenous Peoples and Community-Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCA-GSI)

BELIZE

Global Context

With the adoption of the 2010 CBD 2020 Aichi targets, attention has been focused on recognizing and supporting the vital role of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in conserving biodiversity outside the framework of formally-gazetted and managed government protected areas. To this end, the Global Support Initiative for Indigenous Peoples and Community-Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCA-GSI) was formed in 2014 to broaden the diversity and quality of governance types and protected areas (PAs) and conserved areas (CAs) which contribute to the CBD Aichi Targets.



Aguacate Community Conserved Area

The ICCA-GSI is a multi-partnership initiative delivered by the UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in 26 countries, with \$16.3m funding provided by the Government of Germany, through its Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) International Climate Initiative (IKI). Key partners include the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), Global ICCA Consortium, IUCN's Global Programme on Protected Areas (IUCN GPAP) and the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP WCMC).

Goals

ICCA-GSI's central goal is to improve the recognition, support and overall effectiveness of ICCAs for biodiversity conservation through sustainable livelihoods and self-strengthening of ICCAs. Its work focuses on **Aichi Target 11** (increasing PA coverage), **Aichi Target 14** (safeguarding ecosystems and increasing the effectiveness of its services), and **Aichi Target 18** (Protecting traditional knowledge). ICCA-GSI support is provided at three levels thru:

- (i.) Direct financial and technical support to community-based action and demonstration for the self-strengthening of ICCAs leading to ecosystem protection, legal empowerment, sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction.
- (ii.) National legal, policy and other forms of support to enhance ICCA recognition and conservation, including governance assessments of protected and conserved areas; and
- (iii.) Global and regional networking, knowledge production and exchange support between national CSO initiatives.



Promoting Climate Smart Agroecology for food security, biodiversity conservation traditional knowledge protection in the Maya Golden Landscape

Country Programme Strategy

Belize is known for the beauty of its natural resources, from the vibrant coral reef supporting traditional fishermen and tourism to the vast tropical forests of the Maya Mountains Massif. The socio-economic well-being of Belize's people and the nation's economy as a whole is natural-resource based, with tourism, forestry, fishing and agricultural industries tightly linked to the health of biodiversity and the maintenance of ecosystem services. Furthermore, indigenous and rural communities have traditionally relied on natural resources at the subsistence level, particularly on non-timber forest resources. While there is a strong consideration for a balance between human use, biodiversity conservation and effective management of ecosystem services, Belize is at a tipping point. According to Belize's National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP), *despite stringent*

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environmental legislation, limited resources are impacting monitoring and enforcement, and Belize is experiencing increased removal of essential forest cover and connectivity, clearance and destabilization of hill slopes. Development in low-lying coastal areas is resulting in the clearance of coastal mangroves and the associated erosion of coastlines...”

As such, the ICCA-GSI strategy in Belize is aligned with the national priorities outlined in the Horizon 2030 (Belize’s long-term development goals for 2010-2030) and the Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS) 2016-2019. Unlike other strategic plans, the Horizon 2030 was prepared using a bottom-up approach with a vision “...where citizens live in harmony with the natural environment and enjoy a high quality of life” and also refers to the Country Technical Note on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues (2008). The GSDS strives to bring economic, social, and environmental policies into synergistic balance, so that policies work well together to produce optimal outcomes. These frameworks also note the cross-cutting importance of youth participation, gender considerations and human resources in both the planning and implementation aspects of sustainable development.

Flowing from this, the ICCA-GSI portfolio of projects in Belize aims to increase the recognition of ICCAs through a series of strategic activities including (i) consultations and scoping exercises with regulatory government agencies, representatives of indigenous umbrella organizations, private sector and Protected Area co-managers. Such consultations have informed the development of a baseline report and a strategy supporting the enhancement of biodiversity protection and stewardship of ICCAs; (ii) development of an ICCA Network to establish guidelines in strengthening IPLC recognition and ownership at the local and national level; (iii.) a national legal review and policy analysis relating to Belize’s ICCAs to identify gaps in the existing national frameworks and policies and provide key recommendations to enhance the recognition; (iv) formalization of partnership agreements with regulatory agencies, NGOs/CBOs, local and indigenous communities to harmonize governance roles and responsibilities; (v) targeted projects with NGOs are implemented to enhance biodiversity protection measures and sustainable use of production landscapes by implementing climate smart agro ecological practices; (vi) protection of traditional knowledge (TK) through documentation for environmental protection and inter-generational transfer; and (vii) support to community nature-based tourism and the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises.

Project Portfolio

Project Name	Implementation Period
Development of the Country Programme Strategy and Action Plan for Strategic Support to Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (ICCAs) in Belize	November 2017 – October 2019
Legal Analysis to Assess the Impact of Laws, Policies and Institutional Frameworks on Indigenous Peoples and Community Conserved Territories and Areas (ICCAs)	August 2018 – July 2020
Planning Grant to Develop Proposal titled: "Empowerment of the National Garifuna Council towards Landscape and Seascape Stewardship"	July 2018 – December 2018
Strengthening Indigenous Stewardship of Community Conserved Areas in Aguacate	July 2018 – July 2020
Strengthening the Implementation and Management of a Community Agroforestry Concession in Maya Mountain North Forest Reserve, Belize	November 2017 – March 2019
Updating the Voluntary Pledging System of Landowners /Memberships of the Community Baboon Sanctuary Belize River Valley	November 2017 – October 2019
Video Proposal titled: "Indigenous Community Management of Shared Landscape Resources in San Miguel"	September 2017 – August 2019

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