

# **STRONG** VOICES, **ACTIVE** CHOICES

TNC's Practitioner Framework to Strengthen  
Outcomes for People and Nature



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**TNC's Practitioner Framework to Strengthen  
Outcomes for People and Nature**





# FRAMEWORK PURPOSE AND NAVIGATION

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**T**his framework describes The Nature Conservancy's approach to partnering with indigenous peoples and local communities on shared conservation and sustainable development goals. The framework will be most useful in situations where human well-being outcomes and conservation outcomes are linked and interdependent, where the leadership of indigenous peoples and local communities is essential to achieving shared goals, where power imbalances may hinder achieving sustainable results for nature and people, and where projects may significantly impact local communities.

Beyond a detailed description of the framework and overall theory of change for strengthened voice, choice, and action, we provide practical tips, tools, and resources to implement the framework. The framework can be used in part or in whole, and introduced at any stage of a project. A review of literature and conversations with experts have revealed that approaches and results can be extremely context specific. Hence this framework is not meant to be a step-by-step guide on how to implement the theory of change. However, we do provide helpful tips, questions, tools, and resources that can aid the practitioner who wishes to dig deeper on any of the elements of the overarching theory of change. These specific resources were chosen because they can be applied across multiple regions and contexts.



● ● For an **overview of TNC's approach** - Strengthening Voice, Choice, and Action, see **page 6**.

● ● For detail on **what science and theory** tells us about different aspects of the overarching theory of change for strengthened voice, choice, and action, see **page 9**.

● ● Before digging into the next four themes, read the **important cross-cutting considerations**. This section will ensure you are following human rights-based approaches. See **page 22**.

● ● For a **visual depiction** of TNC's **overarching theory of change** for strengthened voice, choice, and action, see **page 27**.

● For key points, tools and resources on **securing rights to territories and resources**, see **page 28**.

● For key points, tools and resources on **leadership development and capacity building**, see **page 35**.

● For key points, tools and resources on **effective multi-stakeholder platforms for decision-making**, see **page 42**.

● For key points, tools and resources on **environmentally sustainable economic development opportunities**, see **page 49**.



# TNC'S COMMON APPROACH: STRENGTHENING VOICE, CHOICE, AND ACTION

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Indigenous peoples and local communities—specifically those people who possess a profound relationship with their natural landscapes and depend on these territories for their cultural, religious, health, and economic needs—are vital leaders in the pursuit of lasting solutions to the world's most pressing conservation and development challenges. Their rights to and relationship with lands and waters, and deep knowledge of natural systems and resources, make them critical leaders for building a healthy and sustainable future.

Eighteen percent of the world's land is owned by or designated for indigenous peoples and local communities (RRI 2015), and at least double that is claimed but not yet legally recognized (Alden Wily 2011). With their territories harboring more than 24 percent of the world's tropical forest carbon (RRI, WHRC, and WRI 2016), and much of global biodiversity (Sobrevila 2008), indigenous peoples and local communities are among the Earth's most important stewards. Their leadership is key to conservation and sustainable development of their own lands, the territories surrounding them, and ecosystems globally.

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Indigenous peoples and local communities face challenges to making their vision for conservation and healthy communities a reality in part because of power imbalances at local, national, and global scales. These challenges may include:

- **Lack of recognized and enforced rights over territory and resources;**
  - **Insufficient capacity to engage and negotiate positive outcomes in decision-making about managing natural resources, even when rights do exist;**
  - **Exclusion from or under-representation in decision-making processes; and**
  - **Development pressures that undermine cultural and environmental priorities.**
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These challenges present a problem for us as a conservation organization. Evidence shows that conservation and development initiatives are less likely to be successful and sustainable when they lack the active engagement and leadership of the people who have the greatest stake in their outcome and when such initiatives are not guided by traditional knowledge and values. Despite United Nations declarations to the contrary, throughout the world many cases exist where indigenous peoples and local communities are ignored or actively denied the opportunity to participate effectively in the decisions and interventions that impact their lands, waters, and livelihoods. They face exclusion and dispossession, and confront development prospects that undermine their cultural heritage and environmental priorities. These threats to people and nature, both locally and globally, will become more acute as pressures on land and resources continue to grow.

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TNC is working to address these issues by creating and supporting opportunities for indigenous peoples and local communities to play a stronger role in natural resource decision-making and management. TNC does so by strengthening the **voice, choice, and action** of indigenous peoples and local communities through approaches consistent with UN human rights standards. Specifically, TNC supports:

- **Recognition and enforcement of rights to and responsibility for territories and resources;**
  - **Strengthening local leadership and capacity for managing territory and resources;**
  - **Effective multi-stakeholder platforms for decision-making; and**
  - **Environmentally sustainable and culturally aligned economic development.**
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In the last 10 years, TNC's partnerships with indigenous peoples and local communities have spanned 27 countries, led to the conservation or improved management of more than 235 million acres (95 million hectares), and had demonstrably positive impacts on the well-being of 925,000 people (TNC 2016).

## STRENGTHENED VOICE, CHOICE, AND ACTION

The Nature Conservancy aims to help transform the way land and waters decisions are made by strengthening the **voice, choice, and action** of indigenous peoples and local communities to shape and manage natural territory in ways that improve lives and drive conservation.

A stronger **voice** leads to the inclusion of traditional knowledge, identity, local priorities, and values in plans and solutions; the ability to exercise and influence **choice** builds leadership and engagement in decision-making; and greater **action** provides the opportunity for communities to initiate and participate in the implementation of programs and the management of resources that impact their well-being both now and in the future.





# WHAT THE SCIENCE TELLS US

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Land Tenure Security

Common Pool Resources and Indigenous Land Management

Community Capacity and Leadership

Multi-Stakeholder Platforms

Sustainable Economic Development

Human Well-being and Conservation

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## ► LAND TENURE SECURITY

Land tenure is the set of institutions and policies that determine how land and its resources are accessed, who can benefit from these resources, for how long and under what conditions. Land tenure can come in a variety of *forms* and refers to the rules and norms associated with any number of entities, such as an individual, a public institution (e.g., the National Park Service), a private company, a group of individuals acting as a collective, a communal or common property arrangement, or an indigenous group. Likewise, land tenure *security* refers to the assurance that land-based property rights will be upheld by society (Robinson et al. 2014).

Land rights exist in several varieties, specifically access, withdrawal (e.g. extraction), management, exclusion, alienation (right to subdivide or sell), and due process (Schlager and Ostrom, 1992).

These rights typically occur in “bundles,” and different land tenure forms are often associated with certain bundles of rights. For example, communal tenure often includes access, withdrawal, management, and exclusion—but less frequently alienation and due process (Schlager and Ostrom 1992). Because land use decision making is affected by an area’s particular bundle of rights, the bundle’s composition is important to consider when choosing appropriate strategies.

Perception of rights can be as important as legal tenure status when it comes to influencing behavior. Securing formal rights to resources alone is not enough—particularly if recognition and enforcement of formal rights by the government are limited. Also, securing formal rights may not change behavior when communities already feel they have strong informal (de facto) and customary rights (Lawry et al. 2014; Payne, Durand-Lasserve, and Rakodi 2009). Further, a meta-analysis of tropical studies observed no significant relationship between tenure form (who owns land) and forest cover, but tenure security (the assurance that claims will be upheld) was found to be modestly associated with forest conservation (Robinson et al. 2014). This highlights the influence that tenure security, perceived and formal, can have on conservation outcomes.



**Simply put, the more certain people are that their rights to forests will be upheld, the more likely it is those people will protect their forests.**

Research on the relationship between land tenure security and human well-being has found mixed results (Lawry et al. 2014). On one hand, tenure recognition can result in positive impacts by reducing landholders’ uncertainty and supporting investment in development. On the other hand, it can have negative social consequences through reducing women’s access to land and displacement of those facing social and financial barriers to participating in the reformed regime for assigning rights. Similarly, studies into the effects of land tenure security on the environment have found mixed results. It can be difficult to extract the various interacting background factors at play, where context plays a critical role in determining outcomes—the degree of land tenure security in a location is dictated by many interacting elements, such as the political will of the government, its governance capacity, and the broader political economic situation.

In some cases, securing formal rights to resources can help reduce or avoid deforestation by granting landholders access to courts, law enforcement, and regulatory agencies that improve their ability to exclude colonists and extractive industries. Formal tenure reduces the need to demonstrate ownership through clearing of land. (Indeed, historically some governments have incentivized clearing as a means to gain ownership over land—for example, in the Amazon). Owners thus have the security to plan and invest over longer timeframes without the fear of expropriation, to participate in payments for ecosystem services programs, and to make decisions in support of sustainability (Buntaine, Hamilton, and Millones 2015).

While the majority of forest area in most developing countries is still owned by the state, the past two decades have seen an increasing trend of governments devolving ownership and/or management rights to forest users (Sunderlin et al. 2008). Often this takes the form of granting collective property or management rights, since many traditional communities manage lands as common property regimes. Evidence from some empirical studies suggests that decentralized management (e.g., community-led or co-management), when done right, can better protect forest cover than top-down management (e.g., centralized protected area management) (Nepstad et al. 2006; Somanthan, Prabhakar, and Mehta 2009). Further, multiple studies have found that areas in which land and/or management rights have been devolved to communities—and where these rights are recognized and enforced—are less likely to experience deforestation and high carbon emissions (RRI 2015; Stevens et al. 2014; White and Martin 2002). Such areas are also more likely to move toward sustainable management of forest resources (Gregersen et al. 2011; Chhatre and Agrawal 2008; Samii et al. 2014). These results are closely linked to the legal authority for communities to exclude outsiders (enforcement), and the opportunities created by decentralized institutions for local participation, autonomy in rule-making, and increased accountability of institutions (Larson 2004).



**These results are closely linked to the legal authority for communities to exclude outsiders (enforcement), and the opportunities created by decentralized institutions for local participation, autonomy in rule-making and increased accountability of institutions (Larson 2004).**

Yet other cases, where there are weak or transitional governance institutions, have shown that securing land tenure can have negative effects—that is, it increased deforestation. In some circumstances, contextual factors are more influential than tenure. For example, when contextual factors such as remoteness, low colonization pressure, or limited opportunities for commercial agriculture are present, tenure status has no effect on deforestation (Buntaine, Hamilton, and Millones 2015). In cases where there are negative effects, ownership can increase investment in land and agricultural productivity, which then leads to greater land clearing (Liscow 2013). Again, context here is important, as the conditions must be right for increased agricultural activity to be the more desirable option. Additionally, in some cases devolution of rights has led to elite capture, loss or liquidation of land, increased conflict, environmental degradation, and reduced access to resources by the marginalized. Such negative impacts are more likely to occur in communities that lack strong participatory governance institutions and leadership that is accountable to its constituents (Knight et al. 2012) or in situations where customary, community-based tenure systems are disrupted and rapidly move to systems of individual ownership (Almeida, Ribeiro, and Corriveau-Bourque 2014). The potential for such harm underscores the importance of pairing

land titling programs with investments in local governance and appropriate incentives to maintain the natural landscape (e.g., payments for ecosystem services, economic opportunities linked to sustainable management) to increase the likelihood that such strategies result in positive outcomes for nature and people.

In summary, evidence shows that the effects of increasing land tenure security on environmental and human well-being outcomes are mixed. An important consideration is how the interests of indigenous peoples and local communities align with conservation. Additionally, practitioners should consider which incentives and mechanisms will facilitate the maintenance of natural landscapes as a desirable and practical choice. Secure rights, on their own, do not guarantee conservation, but they are an important ingredient. Subsequent sections of this report explain how capacity and leadership, multi-stakeholder platforms for decision-making, and sustainable and appropriate economic development options are important complements to secure rights.

## ▶ COMMON POOL RESOURCES AND INDIGENOUS LAND MANAGEMENT

Common pool resources refer to shared, equal, open, and unregulated resource systems (e.g., grazing lands, forests, fisheries) where exclusion of users is costly, and use by one person diminishes availability for others (Ostrom, Gardner, and Walker 1994).

Many examples exist in which common pool resources have been historically managed by indigenous and local communities and better conserved than areas managed by companies or even government-run protected areas (Stevens et al. 2014).



For example, in Brazil, indigenous areas are statistically more effective at reducing deforestation than government “sustainable use” areas. A study of 80 forest areas in 10 countries in South Asia, East Africa, and Latin America demonstrated that forests owned and managed by local communities led to greater benefits for the community and better storage of carbon (Chhatre and Agrawal 2009). We see these results because lands governed under community-based tenure systems often ensure stewardship of land and resources through well-established local institutions and practices that historically have helped sustain large, intact ecosystems such as tropical forests, rangelands, and large-scale rotational agricultural systems (Kothari et al. 2012).

Common pool resources have been shown to be managed sustainably and effectively when the following eight principles are in place (Ostrom 1990):

- 1 Individuals can participate in modifying the rules that affect them;
- 2 Government authorities do not challenge local decision-making;
- 3 Resource use rights are well-defined, contextualized, and fair, with clearly defined resource boundaries and clearly defined users and non-users;
- 4 Usage rules are tailored to local conditions, and there exists a roughly proportionate distribution of social benefits and costs;
- 5 Active and accountable monitoring exists of both resources and resource users;
- 6 Graduated sanctions from peers or local officials ensure that the punishment fits the crime for rule-breakers;
- 7 Readily accessible and low cost conflict resolution mechanisms allow disputes to be addressed quickly, potentially mitigating larger disputes that might jeopardize the whole system; and
- 8 Governance is nested across multiple layers, each of which is matched to the context.

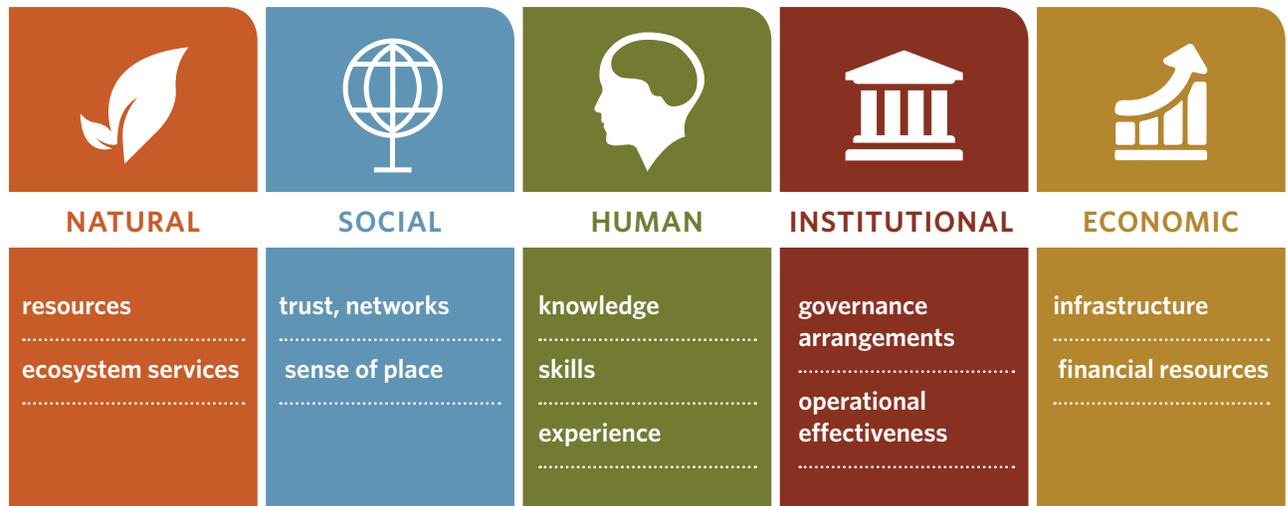


However, when one or more of Ostrom’s eight principles are absent, common pool resources have the potential to be depleted by individual users acting independently and in their own self-interest, and contrary to the common good of all users. In this context, actors deplete or spoil the resource through their collective action, the ecological outcome called “tragedy of the commons” (Hardin 1968). In many of the places where TNC works with indigenous peoples and local communities, territory is managed communally as a common pool resource. When considering how outcomes for people and nature can be improved through increasing the voice, choice, and action of indigenous peoples and local communities, it is important to assess whether the eight characteristics of sustainably managed common pool resources are in place, or could be put in place. Strengthening these elements in a common pool resource scenario can result in more sustainable resource use.

## ► COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND LEADERSHIP

Capacity and leadership are critical to a community’s ability to act collectively, advocate for and exert claims to rights, access funds and manage finances, negotiate with other stakeholders, and pursue business opportunities. Given its foundational nature, supporting the capacity of local organizations and leaders is often a focus of those working in partnership with indigenous peoples and local communities around the world. “Capacity” is defined as the interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of a given community. It may operate through informal social processes and/or organized effort (Chaskin 2001; Moore, Severn, and Millar 2006).

**Community capacity requires capital across the following five categories (Moore, Severn, and Millar 2006):**



Capacity building strategies should, therefore, begin with efforts to assess each of these elements, and then strengthen those that are found to be deficient, and support those already present.

While more research is needed, much of the literature on community capacity shows a positive connection between greater capacity (as indicated by greater capital) and favorable conservation outcomes. Win-win ecological and social outcomes are most likely when a project builds the capacity of individuals and institutions (Brooks 2017). For example, improved biodiversity conservation in agricultural landscapes has been attributed to building social capital through social inclusion and learning (Pretty and Smith 2003; Moore, Severn, and Millar 2006). Efforts to improve communication and mobilize individuals within communities have strengthened social capital and led to more formal institutions to protect wildlife habitat (Tai 2007; Brooks 2017). Increasing human capital through individual capacity building can increase pride, self-confidence, and a sense of belonging, and provide skills that facilitate participation and help individuals harness economic opportunities (Scanlon and Kull 2009; Brooks 2017). Thus, individual capacity building can be a component of a more holistic approach to poverty reduction (Agrawal and Redford 2006; Brooks 2017) that goes beyond income generation by strengthening human capital and improving human capabilities (Sen 1999; Brooks 2017).

A community's ability to successfully secure rights, sustainably manage lands, and pursue economic livelihood opportunities is also directly related to its leaders' integrity, management abilities, organizing skills and commitment.

**Strong individual leaders, with awareness of and ability to navigate the local context and social norms, while holding the trust and respect of the community, serve as crucial stakeholders who can drive community self-organization in natural resource decision-making (Ostrom 2009).**



In most communities, multiple leaders must share overlapping spheres of power and influence, whether customary/indigenous leaders, state leaders (elected or appointed), political party leaders, spiritual leaders, and so on. Communities fortunate enough to have motivated, trusted leaders dedicated to mobilizing community members tend to see the most success in protecting their natural resources (Namati 2016). Experience has shown that when leaders are ineffective, influenced by outside elites, unable to work peacefully with other community leaders, or openly or covertly opposed to community land protection efforts, their communities have difficulty successfully completing land protection activities (Namati 2016). Therefore, when implementing a capacity and institution building strategy with local communities, it is important for practitioners to identify leaders in the community, consider what kind of training they might need, and whether training is likely to increase land protection. If it is determined that training is apt to improve the situation, working with the community's chosen leaders and through its existing institutions is both appropriate and more likely to result in lasting positive impacts.

## 🔍 MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORMS

Multi-stakeholder platforms are “decision-making bodies (voluntary or statutory) comprising different stakeholders who perceive the same resource management problem, realize their interdependence for solving it, and come together to agree on action strategies for solving the problem” (Steins and Edwards 1998; Warner 2005). Given the complex, interconnected, and many times conflicting interests among indigenous peoples and local communities and other actors in a landscape, multi-stakeholder platforms are a promising approach to elevating the voices and strengthening the choices of local communities in decision-making processes.

Several factors influence the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder platforms. For example, a key driver for participation by all parties is the salience of the issue. When the management challenge is immediate and urgent, social pressure for all to participate will be high, especially where interdependence between stakeholders is obvious (Warner 2005). In addition, it is critical that the “right” people are included—namely relevant stakeholders who have an interest in and stand to be impacted by the management challenge (e.g., local communities, civil society organizations, businesses, different levels of government, etc.), as well as those with knowledge to skillfully facilitate (Warner 2005).

Communities themselves have internal diversity that must be acknowledged to ensure adequate representation and participation—for example, women, the elderly, and other potentially marginalized subpopulations who have unique perspectives and knowledge to add to the conversation.



A multi-stakeholder platform ideally encourages the active participation of all stakeholders (including potentially marginalized subgroups) in all discussions and decision-making (Kusters et al. 2017). Bridging organizations—often NGOs or research institutions—can play a crucial role as facilitators, creating linkages among the various actors, and supporting negotiations, collective learning, and conflict resolution (Ros-Tonen et al. 2014; Kusters et al. 2017).

Analysis of examples of multi-stakeholder platforms finds that positive impacts on social outcomes—such as rights recognition, increased access to information, and tenure security—have been observed in many cases; however, this appears to be very closely tied to the level and quality of participation by local communities. For example, an analysis of several multi-stakeholder platforms initiated through the European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (EU-FLEGT) Facility found a general correlation between strength of participation and extent of positive social impacts across the reviewed cases (Lawlor and Lovingood 2016). Review of another example, a Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) multi-stakeholder dialogue in Nepal, revealed that marginalized populations were left out of the conversation, consultation was rushed, and capacity of local communities was not built-in beforehand, leading to unmeaningful participation and an inability of communities

to influence the plan that the process produced (Bastakoti and Davidsen 2015; Lawlor and Lovingood 2016). Thus far, we lack adequate scientific evidence on the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder platforms in achieving conservation goals in the landscape; robust monitoring and evaluation programs could help fill these knowledge gaps (Kusters et al. 2017). However, we do know that power dynamics play an important role in how effectively indigenous peoples and local communities participate in multi-stakeholder platforms.

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**Power dynamics are a key consideration in the design and success of multi-stakeholder platforms, both within the communities themselves and in relation to other stakeholder groups.**

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Although they are challenging to deal with, power dynamics, when recognized and addressed, can be accounted for when seeking to achieve meaningful participation. In many cases, lack of formal rights, lack of capacity, and lack of economic alternatives can put local communities at a comparable disadvantage when it comes to power and influence in decision-making. In the case of environmental degradation, those who benefit from environmentally degrading activities are often more powerful in the current systemic context than those who are harmed by degradation, thus forcing the less powerful actors (local communities) to bear the costs (Boyce 2002). Differences in access, influence, resources, and information are not always easily overcome, and governments can be reluctant to relinquish control, many times using this power to dictate the form (e.g., time of day, time of year, location) and function (e.g., process) of dialogue. Insensitivity to the needs of indigenous people and local communities can further reduce their ability to meaningfully

engage (Warner 2005). In these cases, local communities risk “token” or meaningless participation that does not lead to significant shifts in decision-making authority. Observations of multi-stakeholder negotiations suggest that in practice, a truly level playing field is impossible to achieve (Edmunds and Wollenberg 2002). Instead of assuming they have eliminated or temporarily neutralized power differences within negotiations, practitioners can instead acknowledge power relations in negotiations and work actively to increase the decision-making power of local communities (Edmunds and Wollenberg 2002). Multi-stakeholder platforms are most successful in elevating the voice of indigenous peoples and local communities in natural resource decision-making when they are not only community-led and community driven where possible—as opposed to top-down—but also paired with strategies that increase community capacity to engage, promote recognition of rights, and facilitate power-sharing. Which approach to collaboration is chosen can be very important in addressing power relationships and breaking down hierarchies.

Generally, two approaches to collaborative problem-solving pertain here: conventional collaboration and stretch collaboration. Conventional collaboration—most appropriate when the situation is simple and under control—includes the following steps: The group agrees on the problem, the solution, and the plan to implement the solution (usually after expert analysis of options), and then the plan is executed (Kahane 2017). Conventional collaboration works well when there is a harmonized view of the best way forward, strategic direction can be addressed separately from implementation, individuals are sufficiently committed to the collective that they can bear the costs of their losses, and there is enough functioning hierarchy to implement the chosen direction.

Systems change efforts such as social innovation labs are gaining popularity globally as an approach to tackling multi-stakeholder, multi-dimensional “stuck” problems.

Stretch collaboration, on the other hand, is appropriate in complex, uncontrolled situations where individual actors stand to win and lose significantly, and where trying to find a single, harmonious solution that everyone can agree on first—and then begin to implement—will end up suffocating the system because it rejects the individual stakeholder’s interests.

**IN SITUATIONS WHERE STRETCH COLLABORATION IS APPROPRIATE, MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORMS AND COLLABORATIONS CAN WORK WHEN THEY:**

- embrace conflicts and connections within and beyond the team, creating space for individual actors’ agendas and discord, while also creating the space to more meaningfully engage across conflict (in lieu of focusing on the collective goals and harmony of the team),
- experiment systematically with different perspectives and co-created solutions, taking one step at a time and building on the information that is gained through experimentation (in lieu of insisting on clear agreements about the problem, solution, and plan before action is taken), and
- focus on their role in perpetuating the current situation and creating an alternative solution (in lieu of focus on changing what other people are doing) (Kahane 2017).



The stretch collaboration approach acknowledges that stakeholders who have been shaped by different experiences and world-views frequently do not agree on the definition of the problem in the first place—and that this is okay. But stakeholders need to agree that the situation as it stands is problematic and cannot go on. In these complex and uncontrolled situations, fostering connection with others through breaking down hierarchies, open listening, and dialogue are the keys to collaboration. Ultimately, such actions drive the small shifts in relationships that enable breakthroughs in problem solving and create conditions for collective efforts to flourish. Further, the tendency to “enemy-fy”—or remain mired in an “us versus them” mentality—is reduced. Stretch collaboration can enable stakeholders to walk in each other’s shoes and understand opposing perspectives. During the stretch collaboration process, stakeholders pivot constantly between engaging with each other and asserting their interests toward shared progress. Without a balance between opposing interests,

one side begins to feel manipulated or disempowered (Kahane 2017). It is therefore incredibly important that practitioners support indigenous peoples and local communities in this work. By using these stretch collaboration skills and their capacity to both engage and assert in multi-stakeholder platforms, avoiding manipulation and disempowerment, indigenous peoples and local communities can still continue activities in which they assert and engage outside the structure of the multi-stakeholder platform (for example, through protest).

## ► SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In many places around the world, rural communities—whether indigenous or non-indigenous—face economic stress with high unemployment and few opportunities to generate income. In these circumstances, people and communities who might collectively value conservation are unable to act on that value if they cannot support themselves and their families. When economic stress preempts people’s valuing of conservation and sustainability, projects that create opportunities to generate revenue through sustainable resource management activities have been successful at addressing both concerns at once. People individually and collectively become champions of conservation when they can better align their economic needs with their desires for conservation and sustainability.



**The literature groups economic livelihood-focused interventions centered on sustainable resource use into three broad and overlapping categories: alternatives, compensation (e.g., for reduced access), and incentives (e.g., payments for ecosystem services, co-management of national parks, indigenous protected areas) (Wright et al. 2016).**

Alternative livelihoods are further subdivided into those that provide alternative resources (e.g., chickens as a substitute for bushmeat), those that provide alternative occupation (e.g., cacao farming as a substitute for extensive ranching), and those that provide alternative methods (e.g., reduced impact logging as a substitute for conventional logging) (Roe et al. 2014). These interventions function on the assumptions that, in cases where communities themselves are degrading a natural resource, providing alternatives will change that behavior, and in cases where communities are not degrading a natural resource, the alternatives are better aligned with communities’ values for sustainability.

The literature is flush with examples of enhancing economic opportunity while sustaining natural resources. One case study of four Mexican ejidos pursuing sustainable timber enterprise through Forest Stewardship Council certification found that these communities had greater access to markets for sustainable timber products, greater employment opportunities through forest-based work (e.g., tree felling, sawmill, carpentry), and the rate of deforestation had slowed in the area compared to pre-certification (Maynard and Robinson 1998). Another analysis looking at community-based tourism emphasized its importance in alleviating poverty, empowering local communities, diversifying livelihoods, improving stakeholder cooperation, protecting the natural environment, and helping struggling economies (Dodds, Ali, and Galaski 2016). A third example, a community forest carbon project in Mozambique, found significant improvements in literacy levels, access to a permanent job or a small business, and boosts to household annual cash income and asset ownership after project implementation (Jindal, Kerr, and Carter 2012). Yet in other cases, when the benefits from economic alternatives are not closely tied to sustainable management of resources, they risk becoming supplementary sources of income, with exploitation of the resource continuing at similar levels (Torell et al. 2010; Wright et al. 2016). The additional income may even subsidize higher levels of exploitation by enabling the purchase of more efficient equipment. For example, economic incentives to reduce bushmeat hunting in Ghana led in some cases to more hunting with guns instead of snares (Damania, Millar-Gulland, and Crookes 2005; Wright et al. 2016). In addition, depending on the social structure of the community and those engaged in the activities, issues with equity may arise. For example, women and children may not experience benefits that are controlled by a male head-of-household. Or if only select few community members—usually the least poor—participate in the enterprise, funds may not filter out to the rest of the community (Maynard and Robinson 1998).

Two key factors are associated with positive impacts of economic development opportunities on nature and people. First, the extent to which economic opportunities are closely linked to sustainable management of resources matters. Second, the existence of an institution that is effective at equitably sharing and managing the benefits makes a difference. Further, the success of livelihood-focused interventions also depends on other elements of human well-being beyond simple wealth creation, such as the needs and aspirations of the people concerned, the level of prestige or job satisfaction, spiritual or symbolic values, cultural attachment, and the vision that they have for their future and the future of their lands (Wright et al. 2016; FFI 2013). Clearly, it is important to first understand how individuals and communities value conservation and how economic stresses influence their ability to act on their values. Additionally, strategies need to account for the fact that communities are not homogenous.

Across a community, people will have varying tolerance for the “risk” associated with altering their livelihoods. For example, the extremely poor and resource dependent might have lower risk tolerance or ability to afford a switch (FFI 2013). Further, alterations to existing livelihoods

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**Different members of the community use resources in different ways; therefore, making sure that the “right” people are benefiting from changes to management—those who are most heavily exploiting the resource, but also those most dependent on the resource, the poorest and most vulnerable—is very important (Wright et al. 2016).**

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tend to have more uptake and be more successful than those that change wholesale to something new (FFI 2013)—for example, shifting from conventional logging practices to reduced impact logging practices. Finally, external factors can also play an important role in the success of livelihood-based interventions. For example, market forces, price fluctuation, market access, and location/isolation impact a community's ability to sell products or services, as well as to obtain a premium price; these factors could even promote further expansion if appropriate governance structures are not in place (van Vliet 2010; Wright et al. 2016).

All of the above considerations highlight the importance of community-led, community-driven economic development that accounts for these nuances and that includes a mixed portfolio of appropriate livelihood options, diversifying the risk of any one venture failing. Dialogue with individuals and groups at multiple levels can help create understanding about the evolving nature of opportunities and threats from different perspectives; good dialogue allows management approaches to be adapted accordingly (Cundill et al. 2011; Wright et al. 2016).



**Perhaps most important, economic opportunity strategies executed in the name of conservation need to be closely linked to sustainable management of the natural resources themselves (Wright et al. 2016).**

## ► HUMAN WELL-BEING AND CONSERVATION

Human well-being can be defined as a state of being in which one's needs are met, one can act meaningfully to pursue chosen goals, and one enjoys a satisfactory quality of life (TNC 2016). A means by which human well-being can be enhanced is through three interacting and complementary pathways—opportunity for wealth creation (e.g., jobs, income, access to markets), security (e.g., safety, clean and sufficient water, food, health, tenure), and empowerment (e.g., participation in decision-making, knowledge, rights) (World Bank 2000). These three elements have been described as critical to enhancing human well-being and attacking poverty. However, as the previous sections demonstrate, advancements in opportunity, security, and empowerment also enable local communities to better define, pursue, and exercise their vision for conservation and sustainable development. The opportunity for wealth creation through sustainable economic enterprise can lead to enhanced conservation outcomes when certain enabling conditions are present—for example, a strong link between sustainable management and economic enterprise. In communities with strong participatory governance institutions and leadership with downward accountability, greater security in the form of tenure security has resulted in reduced deforestation. Additionally, studies have shown a positive connection between empowerment (as indicated by greater capacity) and favorable conservation outcomes.

Opportunity, security, and empowerment are all means by which human well-being and conservation outcomes are enhanced; in fact, they are an end-goal in themselves (Sen 1999).



# IMPORTANT CROSS-CUTTING CONSIDERATIONS

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## ► CONTEXT, CONTEXT, CONTEXT

One thing is clear from review of literature and conversations with experts: Context really matters. Unfortunately, there is no single recipe for creating the conditions under which a strategy will succeed—there are too many confounding contextual variables, and more evidence will be needed. This underscores the importance of the following cross-cutting considerations:

1

Whether a program is pursuing one or all of the strategies outlined in the theory of change for strengthened voice, choice, and action, a deep knowledge of the local context is key to targeting and fine-tuning strategies. Some staff might have this knowledge already. In other cases, it could be gained or supplemented through partnership with the communities themselves, in consultation with local experts, or by undertaking a thorough situation and stakeholder analysis that delves into a more detailed understanding of the various actors and their interests, formal and informal governance systems, community social structure, drivers of land degradation, economics, and so on.



For information on how to conduct a situation and stakeholder analysis, consult:

- **Section 2 of Conservation by Design 2.0 Guidance Document Version 1.0 (TNC 2016)**
  - **Stakeholder Analysis and Power Mapping Activity on page 36 of Community Land Protection Facilitators Guide (Namati 2016)**
-

## 2

Robust monitoring, evaluation, and documentation systems for both environmental and human well-being impacts are needed to ensure that interventions are having the desired effect, and to fill the current evidence gaps in the literature around what works and when.

For information on monitoring and evaluation of environmental impacts, consult:

- **Sections 11, 13, and 14 of Conservation by Design 2.0 Guidance Document Version 1.0 (TNC 2016)**



For information on monitoring and evaluation of human well-being impacts, consult:

- **Strengthening the Social Impacts of Sustainable Landscapes Programs: A Practitioner's Guidebook to Strengthen and Monitor Human Well-being Outcomes (Wongbusarakum et al. 2014)**

### ► TNC'S PARTICIPATORY AND HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

When the connections among conservation activities, human rights, and human well-being are understood, acknowledged, and addressed, conservation activities have a much higher potential for generating positive social impacts and contributing to more sustainable conservation outcomes. From an ethical perspective, conservation organizations such as TNC have a responsibility to strive for these positive, tangible benefits. Moreover, we need to understand, anticipate, and avoid negative impacts to vulnerable populations such as indigenous peoples, local communities, and marginalized subpopulations whose rights, territories, or livelihoods may be affected.

The Conservancy is committed to respecting, promoting, and upholding the best practices and standards as outlined in international instruments relevant to indigenous peoples, in particular the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** (UN 2008). As a founding member of the **Conservation Initiative on Human Rights** (IIED 2009)—a consortium of international conservation organizations that seeks to improve conservation by promoting integration of human rights in conservation policy and practice—TNC is committed to fully integrating human rights standards throughout its conservation work, particularly with respect to indigenous peoples.

These rights are recognized and respected through participatory practices. All four strategies in the overarching theory of change incorporate these practices and require them for success. A participatory and rights-based approach spans the entire lifecycle of the project, from initial consultation and planning, to implementation and monitoring, to analysis and sharing of lessons learned. In this way, local communities are true partners and drive the process, the project benefits from the rich local knowledge and participation of its closest stakeholders, long-term sustainability is increased, and these partners can shape and share in the benefits to nature and people.

We recommend that the references below be consulted often and implemented throughout the life cycle of any project being undertaken in partnership with indigenous peoples and local communities.

TNC's Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Global Lands-Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities teams, in collaboration with representatives from four geographic regions and the General Counsel team, are developing an operational toolkit for the Conservancy's work with indigenous peoples and local communities. The toolkit is intended to guide, deepen, and streamline the participatory and human rights-based activities in planned or existing projects.

The operational toolkit is aligned with international standards and internal TNC resources and guidance, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Conservation Initiative on Human Rights' Guiding Principles, and Conservation by Design 2.0.

**The toolkit consists of a flowchart of steps for engagement, relevant questions and references, and supporting protocols. The steps of the flowchart are:**

- 1 Identify and Engage Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- 2 Conduct an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
- 3 Conduct a Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) Process
- 4 Establish a Grievance Mechanism and Ensure Accountability
- 5 Integrate a Human Rights-based Approach into the Project Management Plan
- 6 Document and Monitor the Project

**Supporting protocols have been written for steps 1, 3, and 4.**

The toolkit is a living document. It will be field tested at three sites over 18 months and refined based on staff and partner feedback. Additional protocols will be developed as engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities grows more robust.

**For more information on the operational toolkit, contact Laurel Chun (lchun@tnc.org).**

In addition, Conservation by Design 2.0 emphasizes and incorporates social safeguards into the planning and implementation of the Conservancy's work.

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For more information on incorporation of social safeguards into project planning and implementation, consult:



- **Conservation by Design 2.0 Guidance Document, Version 1.0 (TNC 2016). Specifically:**
  - **Social Safeguard Questions on pages 16-17**
  - **APPENDIX C: Social Safeguard Questions and FPIC**
  - **APPENDIX D: Consideration of Human Rights in Conservation Projects: The Nature Conservancy's Approach**

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Many of TNC's strategies in partnership with indigenous peoples and local communities include workshops and trainings. In some cases, these trainings are conducted by TNC staff or partners, while in other cases a "train-the-trainer" model is used, where local community members are educated on training techniques to then conduct trainings themselves. Regardless of who conducts the trainings, success will be determined by how well the trainers can tailor information to the local context, engage the learners, and execute. Some important considerations when implementing trainings include time of year (e.g., trainings conducted during harvest or holiday season are unlikely to be highly attended), time of day (e.g., in consideration of participants' daily work schedules), location, language, cultural appropriateness, and inclusion of marginalized subpopulations (e.g., women, children, elderly). The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) Participatory Learning and Action guide (IIED 1995) is considered by many to be the go-to handbook on facilitating participatory trainings with local communities. This comprehensive guide includes sections on:

Preparation and organization of workshops

Facilitation skills and techniques

Group dynamics and team building

Key principles of participatory learning

Other helpful considerations

## TIP



Each section ends with a trainer's checklist of questions emphasizing the main takeaways.

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For guidance on facilitating participatory trainings, consult:

- **A Trainer's Guide for Participatory Learning and Action (IIED 1995)**



For additional best practices for working on collective action issues in a natural resource management context, consult the following resource—a very short read but highly practical and steeped in deep experience:

- **Simple Rules for Catalyzing Collective Action in Natural Resource Management Contexts (Colfer 2007)**

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It is also necessary to pay attention to gender and equity, and how these issues play out in the context of communities and strategy implementation. Certain activities may increase the burden of work on more vulnerable household members, such as women and children. In some cases, women, children, and other subpopulations might not share equally in economic benefits from the project. Women and men often use natural resources in different ways, depending on their socially defined roles and responsibilities, and thus have different knowledge and skills. If these differences are not fully understood, the success of any intervention is likely to be limited, and possibly with unintended consequences for poor and marginalized groups (FFI 2013). Likewise worth noting regarding the important role women can play are the cases in which community institutions with a greater proportion of women in their principal decision-making body see significantly better forest outcomes than those without (Agarwal 2009).

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For information on integrating gender considerations into planning and implementation, consult:

- **TNC's Gender Conservation Checklist (TNC 2014)**



- **Section titled "Ensuring the Participation of Women and Minority Groups" on pages 29-32 and section titled "Strengthening the Land Rights of Women and Members of Minority Groups" on pages 105-111 of Community Land Protection Facilitators Guide (Namati 2016).**

# OVERARCHING THEORY OF CHANGE FOR STRENGTHENED VOICE, CHOICE, AND ACTION

Where sustainable natural resource management and community well-being are interdependent, achieving lasting positive results for people and nature generally requires the presence of four interdependent and mutually reinforcing conditions:

## ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

When indigenous peoples and local communities have economic opportunities that are based on sustainable resource use and are aligned with their cultural values and traditional practices, they are better able to assert their interests in conservation while maintaining a stronger bargaining position when other actors propose economic options that degrade the environment and are poorly matched to cultural values.



## SECURE RIGHTS TO TERRITORIES AND RESOURCES

When indigenous peoples and local communities have recognized and enforced rights to and responsibility for their territories and natural resources, they are better able to assert their interests in conservation and sustainable natural resource use.



## EFFECTIVE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORMS FOR DECISION-MAKING

When indigenous peoples and local communities effectively and meaningfully engage in multi-stakeholder platforms, land use decisions better reflect diverse perspectives on sustainability, incorporate unique insights on management and resilience, and benefit from a sophisticated understanding of the interconnectedness of nature and people.



## STRONG COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY

When indigenous peoples and local communities have strong leaders and capable institutions, they are better able to exercise their rights to territory, resources, and self-determination, and meaningfully engage in decision-making.



## ENDURING CONSERVATION AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES



# SECURE RIGHTS TO TERRITORIES AND RESOURCES

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**W**hen indigenous peoples and local communities have recognized and enforced rights to and responsibility for their territories and natural resources, they are better able to assert their interests in conservation and sustainable natural resource use.

## KEY POINTS

- Evidence shows that when indigenous peoples and local communities have rights to their resources, less environmental degradation occurs; however, there is great variability in its degree. The literature so far cannot definitively state when securing rights will lead to positive versus negative environmental outcomes. The enabling conditions that influence such scenarios in either direction appear to be very context specific. More research is needed, and robust program monitoring and evaluation will help fill these critical knowledge gaps.
- We know anecdotally that under certain circumstances, securing rights is more likely to be an effective conservation strategy. These instances include situations where the community has a strong conservation ethic, governance is robust and—in the case of common pool resources—Ostrom’s eight principles are present (see “**Tool E: Assessing community capacity and context**” in “**Strong Leadership and Capacity**” section on page 36.), leadership is downwardly accountable, and economic opportunities exist that are closely linked to conservation and sustainable management of resources.

- We know anecdotally that under certain other circumstances, securing rights is less likely to be an effective conservation strategy—these include situations where communities do not have a strong conservation ethic, have weak governance, corruption is an issue, and strong external incentives to sell land exist.

- When pursuing a strategy to secure rights, it is important to understand the existing rights of communities and how they play out in the current context—the “bundle of rights,” formal (de jure) versus informal (de facto) rights, recognition of rights within the community and by other stakeholders, and enforcement of rights by the community and by the government. All of these factors can will influence both the approach and strategy effectiveness.

- Simply having rights is not enough; these rights must: include the appropriate “bundle of rights” for the context, be known to the rights holders, be broadly recognized/respected by other stakeholders, and be exerted by rights holders.

## TOOLS AND RESOURCES



### ● **TOOL A: UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS MIGHT INVESTING IN LAND TITLING RESULT IN POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT? (Adapted from Buntaine et al. 2015 and Namati 2016.)**



If the answers to the following questions are YES, conditions may favor land titling as a strategy to produce positive impacts for nature:

- Is there colonization and extraction pressure from competing users?
- Is land clearing used as a strategy to assert rights under insecure tenure?
- Does the territory have high economic and cultural value for local communities?
- Are complementary land management programs and trainings available or planned?
- Is there access to payments for ecosystem services programs?
- Does the community have systems for transparent, just, and equitable land governance?
- Is the community highly motivated to protect their lands and/or feel strongly that their tenure security is threatened?
- Does the community have strong, unified leadership?
- Is the community flexible and willing to compromise when harmonizing boundaries with neighbors and drafting community rules of use?
- Is the community well-organized and familiar with pursuing collective goals cooperatively?



If the answers to the following questions are YES, conditions may NOT favor land titling as a strategy to produce positive impacts for nature—and could result in negative environmental impacts—if not paired with strategies to mitigate:

- Are there opportunities for commercial agriculture based on proximity to markets?
- Are traditional landholders able and likely to sell land to new user groups?
- Does the opportunity to receive title set off competition for land by competing users?
- Is increased extractive capacity present because of reduced effort devoted to exclusion?
- Is the community unmotivated to protect their lands or do they not feel that their tenure security is threatened?
- Is the community governed by weak or corrupt leadership or by leaders who cannot cooperate?
- Does the community lack internal cohesion and a proven track record of collective action?
- Is the community unwilling to compromise to harmonize boundaries and agree on rules of use?
- Is the community confronted with elite community members who seek to grab land for their own use, and who are thus intent on sabotaging the community land protection process from within?

## **🔗 TOOL B: UNTANGLING “BUNDLES OF RIGHTS”**

While the literature suggests that certain tenure forms (e.g., private, communal, etc.) are often associated with certain bundles of rights (e.g., access, management, etc.), these groupings can be highly localized and context dependent. Since the rights present in an area will influence the strategies a practitioner might pursue (and the effectiveness of these strategies), it is useful to undertake an exercise to better understand the various tenure forms and formal/informal rights in the landscape. The five steps here in Tool B operate under the presumption that the practitioner has determined that present conditions support tenure security as an effective strategy to achieve positive environmental impacts (see **Tool A**). The practitioner may wish to structure the following information in the form of a table, with tenure form across the top and rights down the side.

1

Determine the stakeholders who have an interest in the landscape through stakeholder analysis. See Section 2 of *Conservation by Design 2.0 Guidance Document, Version 1.0* (TNC 2016) and the Stakeholder Analysis and Power Mapping Activity on page 36 of *Community Land Protection Facilitators Guide* (Namati 2016) for more information on how to conduct a stakeholder analysis.

2

Determine tenure forms present in the landscape. Examples include private, communal, public, state protected land, private protected land, customary, and so on.

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3

Determine the formal (de jure) bundle of rights associated with the various tenure forms in the landscape through review of applicable local, subnational, and national laws.

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TIP



*Check first to see if such a review has already been conducted or published for the area. Seek local experts and partner organizations focused on tenure institutions where available. In cases where these formal rights exist but communities don't know about them, practitioners have seen success with "awareness raising" campaigns that educate communities on their legal rights and the processes to exert their rights.*

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4

Determine the informal (de facto) rights in the landscape. This step is particularly important with communal or customary tenure forms.

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TIP



*Seek local experts familiar with community social structure, governance, and institutions where available. Community focus groups and key informant interviews can help determine informal rights. Studies have found that focus groups offer unique insight on sensitive topics, including environmental regulations, since people are often more likely to share opinions and experiences when they are in a group setting, particularly if they perceive themselves to be in the presence of others like themselves (Morgan and Krueger 1993; Browne-Nuñez et al. 2015; Holland et al. 2017). For guidance on conducting key informant and focus group interviews, see Sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 of TNC's **Strengthening the Social Impacts of Sustainable Landscapes Programs: A practitioner's guidebook to strengthen and monitor human well-being outcomes** (Wongbusarakum et al. 2014).*

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5

Assess how these tenure forms and bundles of rights stand to interact in the landscape. Who has formal rights and are any key rights missing from the bundle? Are de facto rights present and respected? Are there changing dynamics and pressures in the landscape that could threaten recognition and enforcement of de facto rights?

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## ► TOOL C: MAPS OF LAND RIGHTS AND TENURE SECURITY

Several initiatives have begun to map indigenous and local community land rights and tenure security at the national scale. Given the coarseness of national scale data, this information will likely need to be supplemented by local assessments, such as the one described in Tool B. Nonetheless, these maps can give practitioners a jumping off point—particularly when contemplating entering a new landscape. Note that, given spotty data availability, not all countries are currently included in these maps, but they are constantly being built upon and improved.

### *LandMark*

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An online, interactive global platform hosted by World Resources Institute (WRI) and Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) to provide maps and other critical information about lands that are collectively held and used by indigenous peoples and local communities. Because of its specific focus, the platform does not provide a broad, baseline understanding of tenure security across countries.

### *The Global Property Rights Index*

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A global indicator of citizens' perception of the security of property rights, an initiative of Omidyar Network and the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Intended to monitor and encourage good governance of property rights. The focus is not explicitly on land tenure security, but on property rights more broadly.

### *Global Governance Context for Land Tenure Security Index and Map*

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A land tenure security Geographical Information Systems (GIS) layer to inform global prioritization and analysis of the governance context for land tenure security. This resource is a product of the Working Group on Land Tenure Security, Conservation and Human Well-being, a TNC-led collaboration of NGOs and academic institutions. As of mid-2017, the index and map are in development and not publicly available. For inquiries into status and future use of the index and map, contact Working Group members Allison Kelly ([allisonckelly@gmail.com](mailto:allisonckelly@gmail.com)) or Yuta Masuda ([yumasuda@tnc.org](mailto:yumasuda@tnc.org)).

## ► TOOL D: MAPPING AND REGISTRATION OF COMMUNITY LANDS

Creating maps that delineate the boundaries of traditional lands, use of lands, location of resources, and sites of cultural or religious significance helps communities appeal for formal rights to territories and resources and negotiate with other actors in the landscape. However, these activities must combine the technical work of mapping and documenting community lands with the governance work of strengthening land and natural resource management, holding leaders accountable, and ensuring intra-community equity. If community land documentation and registration efforts are undertaken without empowering communities to establish good governance over their lands and natural resources, such efforts may do more harm than good: Leaders with a map and no downward accountability can sell or transact community land much more easily.

### TIP



*Information on capacity building and governance strengthening can be found in the “Strong Leadership and Capacity” section of this framework on page 35.*

The procedures for formal registration of the lands of indigenous people and local communities vary greatly among countries. Every nation has its own set of policies and procedures for the registration of land rights and the issuance of titles, deeds, or certificates of land use and management. Facilitating organizations should carefully research national laws and regulations to understand how to best support communities through the land registration, certification, or titling process. Facilitating organizations should also research the advantages and disadvantages of land rights documentation so they can advise and inform communities of their options, as in some contexts registration might be undesirable or even unnecessary (e.g., strong de facto rights without current threats to tenure security).

### TIP



*While most resources on formal registration are specific to the laws in the project location, the Namati document below also provides a good general overview of considerations for registration of community lands. See the section titled “Completing Government Registration Procedures” on pages 177-181.*

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For information on participatory mapping of community lands, see:

- **Chapter 6, “Land Management: Preparing Three-Dimensional Land-Use Map,” pages 57-65 of SIGAP-REDD+: Inspiring People Actions for Change in REDD+ (Hartanto et al. 2014)**
  - **Methodology of Collaborative Cultural Mapping (ACT Brazil 2008)**
  - **Section titled “Harmonizing Boundaries and Documenting Community Lands,” pages 133-176 of Community Land Protection Facilitators Guide (Namati 2016)**
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## Tanzania: A TNC Case Study in Securing Rights to Territories and Resources

Tanzania's northern rangelands stretch across 8 million acres (3.2 million hectares) and include some of Africa's most important wildlife migration sites, including the Serengeti and the Ngorongoro Crater, as well as the homes of Maasai pastoralists and the Hadzabe and Akie, two of the last remaining hunter-gatherer tribes on Earth. Population density has nearly tripled in this region in the last 40 years, which is leading to competition between land uses (mainly agriculture and grazing), threatening pastoralists and hunter-gatherers as well as the wildlife that depend on these lands for grazing and migration. Local villages have the right to subdivide all their village land, and once land is officially given to an individual, that land can be further subdivided to sons. This law favors local level ownership and the individual. Additionally, the Tanzanian central government is very strong and can expropriate land for large commercial farms if the village does not hold official title (ownership) via a Village Certificate and Certificate of Customary Right of Occupancy (CCRO).

TNC is working with communities and partners to secure legal tenure and management rights for pastoralist and hunter-gatherer communities through collective CCRO designations. This legal tool—pioneered by partner Ujamaa Community Resource Trust and building off existing CCRO designations for individuals—allows communities to own and manage traditional lands and earn benefits from natural resource-based enterprises such as ecotourism and carbon credits. The collective title (collective CCRO) usefully provides a second layer of protection for common pool resources over and above the village land use plan—a mechanism that is helpful for long-term management and improved and secured grazing access over time.

By expanding this model across Tanzania's rangelands, we are seeing more equal access and ownership, and more secure communal rights to land over the long-term as the basis for pastoralist livestock production and land management systems. When cross-border grazing corridors are kept open, livestock and wildlife become healthier, which reduces conflict between villages and can increase their revenue. The tenure mechanism itself requires strong management plans and provides a basis for negotiating with government and tourism operators. Although some cases of farming encroachment exist, when tested in court the courts have ruled in favor of the CCRO easement. Over the past seven years, 2 million acres (818,000 hectares) have been put under Village Land Use Plans. Nine hundred fifty thousand acres (386,000 hectares) in 29 CCROs of rangelands have been protected through this mechanism, with an additional 19 CCROs expected by 2019.



# STRONG LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY

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**W**hen indigenous peoples and local communities have strong leaders and capable institutions, they are better able to exercise their rights to territory, resources, and self-determination, meaningfully engaging in decision-making.

## KEY POINTS

- Strong community capacity and governance—where there is also downward accountability to avoid elite capture—have been shown to be positively correlated with conservation outcomes and are central to a community’s ability to act collectively, advocate for and exert rights, access funds and manage finances, negotiate with other stakeholders, and pursue business opportunities.
- Community capacity building strategies often include efforts to assess five elements of capital (natural, social, human, institutional, and economic), strengthen those that are found to be weaker, and support those already present.
- It is important to work through a community’s own representative institutions and chosen leaders, and within their existing governance structures (unless they are broken, in which case working to rebuild or strengthen might be warranted), while facilitating a participatory process underpinned by diversity, equity, and inclusion, making special provisions for the meaningful participation of subgroups within communities who may be marginalized (e.g., women, youth, the elderly, etc.).

- Projects that partner with communities with trusted, respected, committed, and motivated leaders and champions—who have the interests of the community at heart—tend to be most successful.

## TOOLS AND RESOURCES



### ▶ TOOL E: ASSESSING COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND CONTEXT

As capable institutions and accountable governance are the cornerstones to success of other interdependent strategies to increase community voice, choice, and action, one of the first actions many practitioners undertake is an assessment of community capacity in these areas.

In many of the places that TNC works in partnership with indigenous peoples and local communities, territory is managed communally as a common pool resource. When considering how outcomes for people and nature can be improved through increasing the voice, choice, and action of indigenous peoples and local communities, it is important to assess whether the eight characteristics of sustainably managed common pool resources are in place, or could be put in place.



An answer of YES to the following questions indicate that the governance context is favorable for sustainable management of resources (Ostrom 1990):

- Can individuals participate in modifying the rules that affect them?
- Do government authorities avoid challenging local decision-making?
- Are resource use rights well-defined, contextualized, and fair, with clearly defined resource boundaries and clearly defined users and non-users?
- Are usage rules tailored to local conditions, and is there a roughly proportionate distribution of social benefits and costs?
- Is there active and accountable monitoring of both resources and resource users?
- Is a system of graduated sanctions in place from peers or local officials that ensures the punishment fits the crime for rule-breakers?
- Are there readily accessible and low cost conflict resolution mechanisms that allow disputes to be addressed quickly, potentially mitigating larger disputes that might jeopardize the whole system?
- Is governance nested across multiple layers, each of which is matched to the context?

While the above questions specifically refer to common pool resource situations, the following seven criteria and questions for good local governance can be used more generally regardless of tenure form, and are highly adaptable to local context (adapted from Lockwood 2010).

### Legitimacy

- Is community leadership conferred with a legal or democratically mandated authority?
- Do community members freely accept the leadership's authority?
- Does community leadership act with integrity and commitment?

### Transparency

- Is decision-making open to scrutiny by community members?
- Is the reasoning behind decisions evident?
- Are achievements and failures evident?
- Is information presented in forms appropriate to community members' needs?

### Accountability

- Does community leadership have clearly defined roles and responsibilities?
- Has community leadership demonstrated acceptance of its responsibilities?
- Is community leadership answerable to its constituency (downward accountability)?
- Is community leadership subject to upward accountability?
- Do the levels at which power is exercised (local, subnational, national, international) match the scale of associated rights, needs, issues and values?

### Inclusiveness

- Do all community members have appropriate opportunities to participate in processes and actions?
- Does community leadership actively seek to engage marginalized and/or disadvantaged stakeholders?

### Fairness

- Are community members heard and treated with respect?
- Is there reciprocal respect between higher and lower level authorities?
- Are decisions made consistently and without bias?
- Are human rights respected?
- Is the intrinsic value of nature respected?
- Is the distribution (intra- and intergenerational) of the benefits and costs of decisions and actions identified and considered?

### Connectivity

- Is community leadership effectively connected with governing bodies at different levels of governance?
- Is community leadership effectively connected with governing bodies operating at the same governance level?
- Are the direction and actions of community leadership consistent with directions set by higher-level governance authorities?

### Resilience

- Does community leadership have a culture of intentionally learning from experience and absorbing new knowledge?
- Does community leadership have the flexibility to rearrange its internal processes and procedures in response to changing internal or external conditions?
- Does community leadership utilize adaptive planning and management processes?
- Does community leadership have procedures to identify, assess, and manage risk?

In addition to institutional capacity just described, we know from the literature that community capacity is also needed across four additional categories—natural, social, human, and economic. It is therefore important to include all categories of capacity in any community capacity assessment.



For information on assessing community capacity across these four additional elements, see:  
▪ **Chapter 4, “Building Community Strength Map,” pages 41-49 in SIGAP-REDD+: Inspiring People Actions for Change in REDD+ (Hartanto et al. 2014)**



*In the above resource, “asset” is used instead of “capital” but refers to the same thing.*

In addition to building capacity of communities and community leaders themselves, TNC has a long history of supporting the capacity of in-country civil society organizations and nonprofits whose work directly impacts indigenous peoples and local communities.



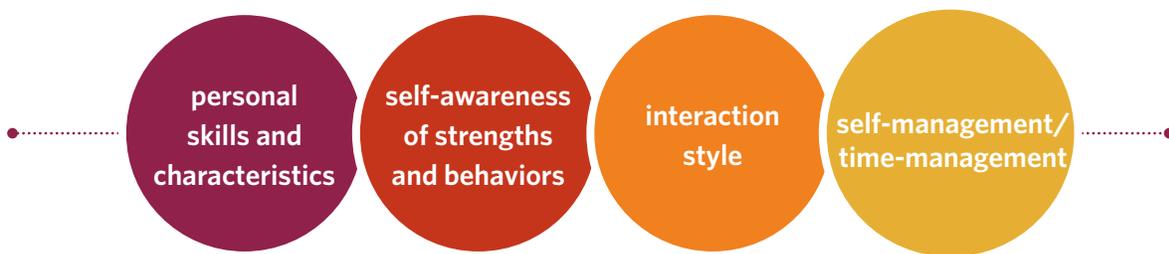
For information on assessing the institutional capacity of TNC partner civil society organizations and nonprofits, including evaluation of strategic vision and planning, leadership, organizational management, human resources, resource development, financial management, constituency building/outreach, and programmatic capacity, consult the following resource:

▪ **Institutional Self-Assessment: A Tool for Strengthening Nonprofit Organizations (TNC 2001)**

## 🔗 TOOL F: ENGAGING AND TRAINING COMMUNITY LEADERS

Efforts to improve natural resource management and conservation outcomes depend largely on the ability of committed, effective, and innovative leaders to drive social and ecological change. The levels of skills, experience, and capacity that individual leaders and community organizations can display will critically effect their success in achieving sustainability. Effective leadership in a context of increasingly complex social, environmental, and political changes and forces requires individuals to develop skills and capacity at three basic levels:

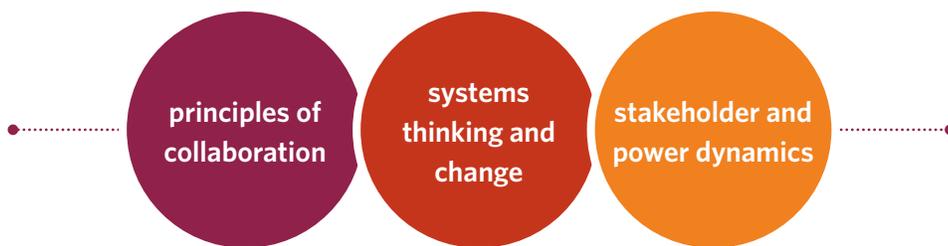
**Individual or personal leadership skills**—how an individual develops his or her own personal skills and characteristics as a leader. Training in the following areas could be helpful as needed:



**Organizational leadership and management skills**—the leadership of organizations and their management as a group of people. Training in the following areas could be helpful as needed:



**Leadership at the systems level**—extending beyond one’s own organization, to how groups collaborate at the scale of multiple organizations, networks, and with different actors whose interactions are critical to achieving large-scale, systemic change. Training in the following areas could be helpful as needed:



For an example of how the above training might be set up, including objectives/outcomes, modules, and flow, see the following training agenda conducted for the Africa Leaders Network, through a collaboration of TNC and Maliasili Initiatives:

• **Africa Leadership Network Welcome Pack (TNC and Maliasili Initiatives 2016)**

For additional information on engaging and training community leaders, see the section titled:

• **“Working with Community Leaders,” pages 33-36, and the section titled “Selecting and Training Community Land Mobilizers and Interim Coordinating Committees” on pages 77-84 in Community Land Protection Facilitators Guide (Namati 2016)**



## TOOL G: CAPACITY AND INSTITUTION BUILDING

Strong community capacity and institutions are the backbone for success of the other components of the overarching theory of change. Experience shows that good governance can help communities avoid unintended consequences of securing rights and wealth creation such as elite capture and sell-off of community lands. Capacity building activities can result in: increased downward accountability of leaders; stronger rights for women, youth, and members of minority groups; improved conservation, use, and management of natural resources; and stronger foundations that support future community prosperity.



For information on community capacity and institution building, see the section titled:  
▪ **“Strengthening Community Governance of Land and Natural Resources,” pages 85-132 in Community Land Protection Facilitators Guide (Namati 2016)**



See “Suggested By-Laws Outline” on pages 99-104 of the above reference for a comprehensive list of community governance considerations.



### The Emerald Edge: A TNC Case Study in Leadership Development and Capacity Building

At 100 million acres (40 million hectares), the Emerald Edge is the largest intact coastal temperate rainforest system remaining in the world. This band of vibrant forest and ocean stretches northward from the Olympic Peninsula of Washington State, through Canada’s coastal British Columbia and the Great Bear Rainforest, to the panhandle of remote southeast Alaska. In this landscape, indigenous communities have recognized rights and authority—therefore, the focus of the Emerald Edge Program is on supporting the capacity of leaders of indigenous and local communities to be the long-term stewards of their lands and waters. TNC works to support local and indigenous community leadership, governance, and capacity to manage their lands and waters, and catalyzes economic opportunities that support livelihoods that are aligned with conservation along the coast.

To this end, TNC has supported several programs meant to build a “ladder of opportunity” for indigenous leadership and capacity. The Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards (SEAS) program aims to engage, develop, prepare and empower indigenous youth to become the next generation of stewards in their communities and territories. Young people take excursions onto their traditional territories to reconnect to the natural world, engage in customary activities, and learn from elders. Another initiative, the Guardian Watchmen program, supports indigenous rangers to take control of monitoring their territories and carry forward the work of their ancestors to manage and respect their natural and cultural resources through traditional laws. These rangers monitor the health of important food, social, and ceremonial species, taking account of various resource uses throughout their territory and contributing to the successful implementation of land and marine use plans and other sustainable resource management initiatives. TNC and partners have co-developed an **Indigenous Guardian Toolkit** that will facilitate the expansion of the program within and beyond British Columbia.

Supporting indigenous community leadership and institutional capacity through learning exchanges has been catalytic for the Emerald Edge. The success of this approach is demonstrated by the recently completed land use vision by the Ahousaht Nation in British Columbia. TNC supported the development of the land use vision of the Ahousaht First Nation by providing critical technical and financial capacity for several years; however, it was a leadership exchange coordinated between the Ahousaht and Haida Nations that ended up being transformational. The exchange helped Ahousaht leadership strengthen their negotiations with the Provincial Government and achieve more effective authority. In an example of developed leadership, the Ahousaht established a coastal guardian program, were more present in their territories, and integrated areas of cultural significance and traditional place names (partnering with TNC, which provided technical mapping support), all of which bolstered the Ahousahts' negotiations. In July 2016, the community signed a protocol agreement with the provincial premier that directs \$1,250,000 provincial funding over five years to support sustainable economic development in Ahousaht territory and will lead to the protection of more than 150,000 acres (60,000 hectares) of the last remaining old growth forest in Clayoquot Sound.



# EFFECTIVE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORMS FOR DECISION-MAKING

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**W**hen indigenous peoples and local communities effectively and meaningfully engage in multi-stakeholder platforms, land use decisions better reflect diverse perspectives on sustainability, incorporate unique insights on management and resilience, and benefit from a sophisticated understanding of the interconnectedness of nature and people.

## KEY POINTS

- Multi-stakeholder platforms best succeed in elevating the voices of local communities in natural resource decision-making when they are community-led and community driven—as opposed to top-down, which often results in “token” community participation without real change in decision-making authority.
- Community representation—or “a seat at the table”—is not enough; it is essential to have the right person (or combination of people) engaged in active participation in both dialogue and decision-making, which requires capacity to engage, appropriateness of the process, and existing power dynamics among actors.
- Practitioners need to seek out and recognize the power differentials that exist—within communities and across stakeholder groups—and work to create an environment that recognizes them if they are to begin to overcome such differentials and facilitate truly meaningful collaboration.

- Strategies that involve multi-stakeholder platforms usually will need to be paired with strategies that increase community capacity to engage, along with training for other stakeholders on how to engage effectively and respectfully.
- Stretch collaboration is a useful approach appropriate in complex, uncontrolled situations where people don't trust each other or typically work together; it involves seeking out and working with conflicts and connections, experimenting with multiple co-created solutions, and focusing on our own contributions to the problem.
- Skillful facilitation of multi-stakeholder platforms is critical for creating linkages among the various actors, and for supporting negotiations, collective learning, and conflict resolution.

## TOOLS AND RESOURCES



### ► **TOOL H: CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORMS MIGHT BE WARRANTED, IN LIEU OF OTHER METHODS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND DECISION-MAKING** (adapted from Warner 2006 and Kahane 2017).



If the answers to the following questions are YES, conditions may favor multi-stakeholder platforms:

- Are there conflicting interests across stakeholders in the landscape?
- Do stakeholders feel interdependent?
- Are there opportunities for constructive communication among stakeholders?
- Is there a basic willingness (eagerness) to communicate?
- Is there agreement that the situation as it stands is problematic and cannot go on?
- Can the situation be changed?
- Is it impossible to change the situation unilaterally?



If the answers to the following questions are YES, conditions may NOT favor multi-stakeholder platforms—unless paired with strategies to mitigate (when possible). Or, conditions may favor other ways of dealing with the problematic situation, such as *forcing*, *adapting*, or *exiting*. *Forcing* might be used when a situation can be changed unilaterally, and one group, alone or together with similar groups, knows best what needs to be done, and must and can impose this on others. *Adapting* might be used when a situation cannot be changed and a group needs to find a way to live with it, and the group believes that they are not able

to change what is happening outside their immediate area of influence or the “rules of the game.” *Exiting* might be used when a group thinks they cannot change their situation, are no longer willing to live with it, and choose to quit, withdraw, or walk away (Kahane 2017).

- Are conflicts totally antagonistic and is opposition fundamental?
- Are diversity and debate frowned upon in this context?
- Are there legal, political, or bureaucratic concerns that limit the space for utilizing the result of negotiation?
- Is the field dominated by a single actor?
- Can the situation be changed unilaterally? (If so, the situation might favor *forcing*.)
- Is it impossible to change the situation?
- If the situation is unchangeable, can the group bear the situation as it is? (If so, the situation might favor *adapting*. If not, the situation might favor *exiting*.)

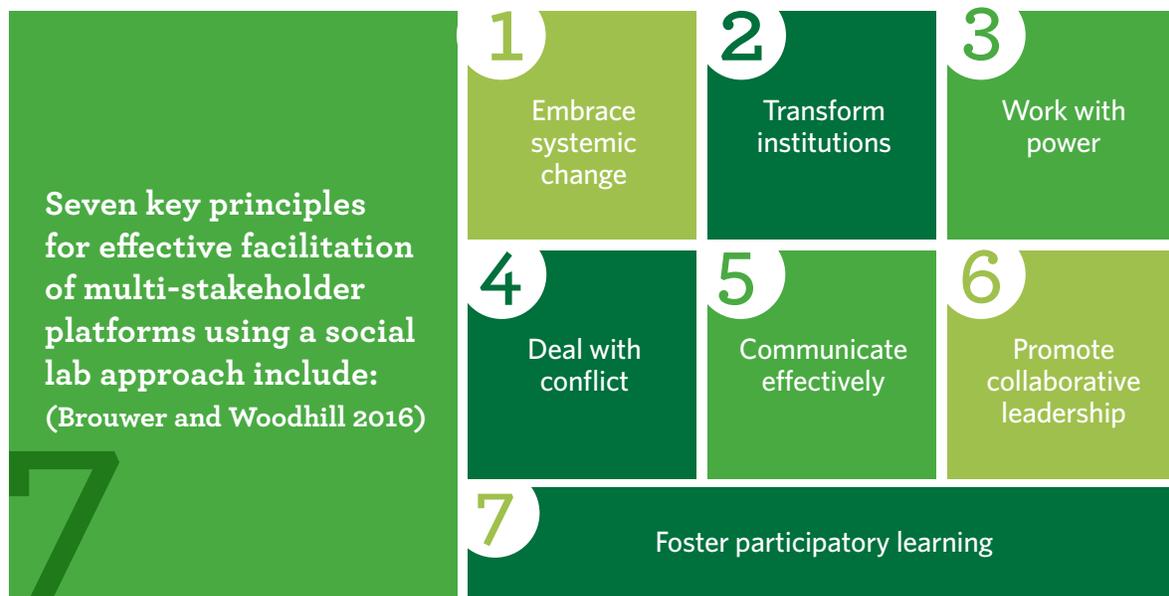
#### 🔗 **TOOL I: KEY ATTRIBUTES OF EFFECTIVE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORMS** (adapted from Kusters et al. 2017 and Edmunds and Wollenberg 2002).

- Representation:** The platform represents the relevant stakeholders in the landscape, which will depend on the objective of the platform and the specific context. First and foremost, prioritization is given to getting the right people. If doing so is impossible, it might be necessary to re-evaluate whether the process is appropriate and should move forward. At the same time, disadvantaged groups have the option not to participate in negotiations and be made more vulnerable to powerful stakeholders. If some stakeholders actively choose not to participate, particularly those from disadvantaged groups, feedback or grievance mechanisms are incorporated into the process, so that these people are able to maintain some ability and legitimacy to speak on the issues at a later date and to avoid further disempowerment.
- Participation and equity:** The platform encourages the active participation of all stakeholders in all discussions and decision-making, including women, the elderly, and other potentially marginalized subpopulations within a community. The platform includes accommodations for language, literacy, location, customs/culture, time of year and time of day, respect and protection of experiential/traditional knowledge, and so on. Processes, decisions, and agreements are deemed legitimate based on the role of and implications for local communities. The reasons for participation or nonparticipation by each group in negotiations, how groups are represented, the roles of conveners and facilitators, and the history of relationships underlying agreements has been analyzed.
- Accountability and transparency:** Platform members share information and explain decisions among each other, including the extent to which they can be sanctioned by other members. Participants are fully informed as to whom conveners and facilitators are accountable. Efforts are made to protect the privacy of traditional knowledge—for example, sacred sites—and information that could potentially be used against local communities and their interests later. The right of indigenous peoples and local communities to identify “non-negotiable” topics, or items they view as inappropriate for discussion in the negotiations, is acknowledged.

- ✓ **Capacities:** The platform harbors or has access to relevant knowledge and skills—different types of knowledge and skills are needed for the management of the multi-stakeholder platform itself, as well as for the successful development of joint activities. Basic capacity building is available in advance for local communities, as well as for other stakeholders, to enhance the ability to communicate effectively and respectfully.
- ✓ **Resources:** The platform has access to sufficient financial resources to operate effectively, both in the present and in the future.
- ✓ **Adaptive management:** The platform management is flexible and adaptive—continuously reflecting on its outcomes and adapting strategies if necessary. Landscape processes are dynamic and changing circumstances can inform decision-making. Agreements are modifiable, particularly if they stand to hurt local communities when the environment or conditions change unexpectedly. The likelihood that external events will require revisions in agreements has been assessed, and provisions have been made for local communities to be involved in those revisions. Negotiations are viewed as a long-term, iterative process, and structures are in place to monitor impacts and adjust strategies to assist local communities accordingly.
- ✓ **Leadership:** Platform leadership is built upon a legitimate and fair process, and it is accepted and trusted by all platform members. Platform leadership drives the process and goals, while facilitation ensures that the process is carried out in a manner that fosters collaboration, creates linkages among the various actors, and supports negotiations, collective learning, and conflict resolution (roles that might or might not be carried out by the same entities).
- ✓ **Theory of change:** Discussions among stakeholders lead to the identification of shared objectives for the future of the landscape and the development of a clear and agreed-upon theory of change—a strategy to achieve the objectives to which all subscribe. However, negotiations are approached as one strategy among several that local communities may pursue simultaneously.
- ✓ **Facilitation and communication:** Platforms have efficient and effective organization of meetings and other partner collaboration processes, as well as the planning and mobilization of agreed actions. Information is widely shared among partners, ensuring that everyone is always up-to-date.
- ✓ **Trust:** Ideally, a platform provides a safe “space of exchange” where stakeholders feel comfortable sharing concerns, values and preferences. A lack of trust among stakeholders will likely result in a lack of transparency and commitment. However, local communities have also been prepared for the possibility that the goodwill demonstrated among groups in multi-stakeholder forums may not last.
- ✓ **Commitment:** The individual platform members are committed to the platform itself as well as to the agreements made within the platform. Their commitment also implies a willingness to compromise and jointly identify solutions that reduce trade-offs and maximize synergies between different interests. Agreements are viewed as a workable conglomeration of interests, and it is acknowledged that each group may not fully and unconditionally support proposed agreements. Stakeholders are encouraged to express their doubts about agreements, explore differences in perspective, and include the input of disadvantaged groups.

## TOOL J: FACILITATING EFFECTIVE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORMS

Through multi-stakeholder platforms, indigenous peoples and local communities elevate their voice and choice in decision-making about resources and landscapes when multiple competing interests are present. However, the need for new approaches to multi-stakeholder collaboration has arisen because of the increasing complexity and diversity of social challenges in the world today. Addressing these issues requires an approach that is systematic, participatory, and emergent at the same time, enabling a grounded approach that is simultaneously adaptable and responsive to the changing nature of the challenge. Social innovation lab approaches to systems change rely on convening a microcosm of the larger system. Such approaches break down hierarchies and foster connections, grasp the nature of the whole system including differing perceptions of the problem, generate reflections on various roles within the system, and co-create/experiment with possible solutions. This process often leads to innovative ideas and forward progress where issues were previously “stuck.”



For information on facilitating multi-stakeholder platforms using a social lab approach, see the following resources:

- **The Reos Change Lab: Addressing Complex Challenges with Social Innovation (Reos 2013)**



See the appendices starting on page 42 of the above resource for helpful additional tools, case studies, articles, videos, and other recommended resources.

- **The MSP Guide—How to Design and Facilitate Multi-stakeholder Partnerships (Brouwer and Woodhill 2016)**
- **The MSP Tool Guide—Sixty Tools to Facilitate Multi-stakeholder Partnerships (Brouwer and Brouwers 2017)**

## The Brazilian Business and Indigenous Peoples Dialogue Initiative: A TNC Case Study in Effective Multi-stakeholder Dialogue and Decision-making



Brazil's indigenous lands occupy 250 million acres (101 million hectares), or about 12 percent of Brazil's landmass. Indigenous residents there help to safeguard the largest tropical forest on earth. These lands represent some of Brazil's best-preserved areas, acting as a barrier to advancing deforestation, and mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration. These lands are under constant threat of encroachment from population growth, urban expansion, large infrastructure projects, expansion of cattle ranching, expansion of agribusiness, and the timber industry. While constitutional and legal recognition of indigenous rights in Brazil is considered progressive, and the country has committed to international agreements on the rights of indigenous peoples, tension still exists between state economic agendas and the rights of indigenous peoples. In this complex and dynamic context, TNC partners with indigenous peoples to facilitate dialogue between them and commercial interests.

The Business and Indigenous Peoples Dialogue Initiative is a multi-stakeholder platform that brings together indigenous organizations, corporations (including major companies in the electric, mining, agribusiness, pulp, paper, and other sectors), business associations, governments, and NGOs. The initiative works to ensure that businesses respect indigenous rights and territories, given increasing development pressures and the imbalance between industry and indigenous access to resources. Success of the dialogue was made possible by more than 10 years of investment that TNC first made strengthening relationships and trust through our work with indigenous peoples (on mapping, planning, and policy support) and corporate partners (on greening supply chains and infrastructure) in the region. The time was ripe for bringing these groups together, as both were growing weary of prolonged conflict—indigenous peoples at the constant fighting for their territories, and companies at delays/costs associated with the conflict as well as increasing pressure to align with human rights standards.

At the start of the dialogue, TNC worked separately with indigenous organizations and corporate partners to build the capacity of each to engage and negotiate effectively. For example, TNC supported the participation of indigenous leaders in United Nations conferences and supplied access to lawyers for them to learn about internationally protected human rights, along with learning exchanges to share information with other indigenous groups across Brazil. TNC worked with corporate partners to educate them on environmental law and human rights, and sponsored a learning exchange with two companies from Canada that had experience successfully implementing Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Members of indigenous communities gathered for two to three days ahead of the start of the dialogue to plan and strategize. One key result of this dialogue has been the creation of voluntary standards, developed through the cooperation of these many stakeholders and an extensive public consultation process; these standards have served to improve relations among stakeholders and provide practical actions that businesses and indigenous peoples can take to monitor and evaluate the performance of companies on or near indigenous lands.

It should be noted that two important enabling conditions influenced the success of the Business and Indigenous Peoples Dialogue Initiative. First, in recent history, indigenous peoples and communities have become more politically organized through representative groups—their associations, cooperatives, councils, federations and other institutions—which mobilized them to defend their rights and oversee the how projects and activities would affect them. Dialogue among these parties therefore now occurs within a context of rising participation and enhanced political leadership among indigenous peoples and communities. Second, TNC partners with indigenous peoples and communities to develop Indigenous Environmental and Territorial Management Plans, which are being implemented in 32 indigenous lands and are incorporated into federal decision-making processes. Indigenous peoples and communities can use these plans to defend and promote their rights, which serve as a powerful tool for engaging and negotiating in multi-stakeholder dialogue with governments and companies.



# ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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**W**hen indigenous peoples and local communities have economic opportunities that are based on sustainable resource use and are aligned with their cultural values and traditional practices, they are better able to assert their interests in conservation while maintaining a stronger bargaining position when other actors propose economic options that degrade the environment and are poorly matched to cultural values.

## KEY POINTS

- The most successful and sustainable conservation-aligned economic development is community-driven, culturally aligned, and based upon the community's vision for its future.
- Literature and experts consistently stress the importance of a clear and visible link between economic opportunities and sustainable management of resources in achieving win-wins for conservation and livelihoods.
- Although not a steadfast rule, economic development opportunities that are associated with or include existing livelihoods—for example, improving upon existing timber harvesting techniques, or scaling up shade grown cacao activities—seem to achieve greater uptake than wholesale new livelihood options.

- Diversification of livelihood options helps reduce the financial risk associated with failure of any one enterprise, particularly important when working in conditions of poverty.
- Deep understanding of context within which a program is working and how that impacts development opportunities is critical—for example, whether policy, institutions, market access, and so on are supportive of the development opportunity.
- It is important to pay attention to issues of gender and equity (as well as other aspects of diversity) and how these play out in the context, to maximize benefits to all community members through appropriate benefit sharing arrangements, and avoid unintended negative consequences.

## TOOLS AND RESOURCES



### ► TOOL K: COMMUNITY VISIONING AND LAND VALUATION

For communities to pursue economic opportunities that are aligned with their culture and interests, they need to collaboratively develop a clear vision for their future. Visioning places community goals and plans at the center, and supports communities as they evaluate how they want to shape the course of their development and future prosperity. Communities consider their land important but do not always understand the value of their land and natural resources in a monetary sense as calculated by outsiders. Communities that do understand those external assessments have more bargaining power with investors and are prepared to negotiate more effectively for a fair deal. A valuation activity can help demonstrate the value that community lands bring to the community already and why it is in their interest to act to protect their lands.



For information on facilitating a visioning exercise, see:

- **Chapter 5, “Building Shared Dreams,” pages 50-56 in SIGAP-REDD+: Inspiring People Actions for Change in REDD+ (Hartanto et al. 2014)**
- **“Community Visioning,” pages 61-63, in Community Land Protection Facilitators Guide (Namati 2016)**



*A visioning exercise is most effective when a large percentage of household members, representing the diversity of the population, is present and actively participates. For information on facilitating a valuation exercise, see “Valuation of Community Lands and Natural Resources,” pages 65-69 of the Namati resource above. A helpful worksheet for basic valuation of community lands and resources can be found on page 69.*

Common tangible outcomes of visioning exercises are territorial management plans that detail how the community will sustainably manage its lands, waters, and resources into the future. TNC and partners have developed many guides on conservation planning—for example, **Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation** and TNC’s adaptation of the Open Standards **Conservation by Design 2.0 Guidance Document, Version 1.0**. In recent versions, these documents have attempted to better incorporate the people side of conservation through the use of human well-being targets. However, practitioners who work closely with indigenous peoples and local communities still recognize that these tools are not appropriate for use out of the box with these groups. Many have proposed an adaptation of the Open Standards process that makes unique considerations for definition of terms, relationships between people and place, incorporation of tangible and intangible cultural targets, and traditional ecological knowledge. Such an approach is used extensively in Australia via Healthy Country Planning.

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For information on how to adapt the Open Standards conservation planning process for use with indigenous peoples and local communities, consult the following resources:



- **Healthy Country Planning: Using Open Standards with Indigenous Communities (TNC Australia 2016)**
  - **Healthy Country Planning Summary Reference Cards (TNC Australia 2012a)**
  - **Healthy Country Planning Tools to Support the Process (TNC Australia 2012b)**
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## ► **TOOL L: MARKET ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED ENTERPRISE (MA&D)**

Successful economic enterprises provide local communities with better opportunities to benefit from natural resources, while also creating greater incentives to sustainably manage and protect those resources. MA&D is especially suitable for enterprises based on natural resources products that need to be protected or conserved because it links participatory natural resources management and conservation activities to income generating opportunities. The highly participatory methodology also takes into consideration the following five areas of enterprise development:



Thorough MA&D can thereby provide a wide scope for understanding relevant market systems and thus avoid business failure. While the methodology is written with forests as the focus, the approach has also been successfully applied to projects related to community-based tourism, agricultural products, livestock initiatives, and coastal fisheries. At the macro level, the methodology includes the following phases, and incorporates gender considerations throughout:

<b>PHASE 0</b>	Preliminary planning—the preliminary phase, perhaps best thought of as ‘Phase 0’, is the time for conducting background research and planning activities that should precede support for tree and forest product-based enterprise development.
<b>PHASE 1</b>	Assessing the existing situation—developing an understanding of the issues and problems, defining opportunities, and short-listing products.
<b>PHASE 2</b>	Identifying products, markets, and means of marketing—deciding on the best products and gathering information for their further development.
<b>PHASE 3</b>	Preparing an enterprise development plan—formulating strategies and identifying services to ensure sustainable development of the enterprise.
<b>PHASE 4</b>	Supporting the start-up of enterprises—obtaining additional training and, if necessary, assistance to start enterprise activities at a pilot level; monitoring and evaluating the development of the enterprise.



*An important precondition required for this approach’s success is secure land tenure—specifically access rights, user rights, and the right to harvest and sell products. (See the “**Secure Rights to Territories and Resources**” section on page 28 for more information on “bundles of rights.”) Additional helpful information on preconditions and troubleshooting problems during the MA&D process can be found on pages 39-43 of the *Community-based Tree and Forest Product Enterprises—Market Analysis and Development Manual* (FAO 2011a), along with checklists to assess the existing situation in Annex 5 and 6 (2011a).*



For detailed step-by-step guidance on planning and implementing the MA&D approach, consult:

- **Community-based Tree and Forest Product Enterprises—Market Analysis and Development Manual (FAO 2011a)**
- **Community-based Tree and Forest Product Enterprises—Market Analysis and Development: The Field Facilitator Guidelines for the Implementation of the MA&D Approach (FAO 2011b)**

## ► **TOOL M: SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT AND DIVERSIFICATION APPROACH (SLED)**

The Sustainable Livelihood Enhancement and Diversification approach (SLED), based on the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and Appreciative Inquiry (AI), is designed to help those working to establish effective conservation projects to engage with local resource users and communities in enabling them to deal effectively with the changes in their livelihoods that these projects will cause. SLED does this by working with indigenous peoples and local communities to identify and develop opportunities for positive change in their livelihoods, based on their strengths and capacities, which take proper account of factors that help and inhibit livelihood change while reflecting people's aspirations and hopes for the future. Although the methodology is written with coral reefs and coastal fisheries in mind, it can be applied widely wherever natural resources are facing degradation due to unsustainable human use.

### **The approach is structured into three distinct phases:**

- **Discovery Phase**—The practitioner is required to gain a full understanding of the complexity of people's livelihoods and their relationship with natural resources, the wider economy, and society. Discovery is carried out through collaborative learning with people about the diversity of resources, skills, capacities, and interests in the community, including which factors have helped or inhibited people in making changes in the past. A joint learning process, discovery helps to build a consensus for the need to change resource use patterns and livelihood strategies. Based on their learning, participants then build "visions" that express the desired outcomes of future livelihood change.
- **Direction Phase**—The practitioner focuses on understanding and analyzing the opportunities for achieving people's visions developed during the Discovery Phase. Options for changing livelihood strategies are considered, choices are made, and more detailed planning for action is carried out.
- **Doing Phase**—Here emphasis is on strengthening people's capabilities and adaptive capacity, together with networks of government, civil society, and private sector services, with the goal of supporting plans for sustainable livelihood development created during previous phases.



For detailed step-by-step guidance on planning and implementing the SLED approach, see:

- **Sustainable Livelihoods Enhancement and Diversification (SLED)—A Manual for Practitioners (IUCN and IMM 2008)**

### **TIP**



An excellent Sustainable Livelihoods diagram displaying many elements that affect attempts to achieve livelihood outcomes is on page 12 of the above reference. Helpful checklists allowing teams to track progress conclude each section.

## TOOL N: INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

An aim of TNC's work in partnership with indigenous peoples and local communities is to foster long-term, environmentally sustainable community growth and prosperity, in support of each community's vision for its future. We support community members in their pursuit of a diverse range of economic livelihood options, their work to conserve and regenerate local ecosystems, their preparation for potential negotiations with investors, and their specific steps to actualize their shared community vision. In addition, TNC works with businesses to help them engage with indigenous peoples and local communities in a manner that respects community rights and desires for management of their territories.



Information on facilitation of multi-stakeholder dialogue can be found in the **"Effective Multi-stakeholder Platforms and Decision-making"** section of this framework on page 42.

For information on preparing and supporting communities as they engage in negotiations with commercial development and investors, see:



- **Good Practices for Engaging with Communities Impacted by Commercial Development Projects: An Internal Guidance Document on Lessons Learned for The Nature Conservancy (TNC 2015)**
- **Preparing Communities for Negotiations with Investors Seeking Lands and Natural Resources," pages 185-198, and "Integrating Livelihood Supports," pages 205-207, in: Community Land Protection Facilitators Guide (Namati 2016)**



From the corporate side, the Namati guide above includes a helpful checklist titled **"What Steps Should Investors Take Before Engaging with Communities?"** on page 188. The **"Good Practices"** guide also includes a list of **"Best Practices for Development Projects"** on pages 15-16.



### Northern Australia: A TNC Case Study in Environmentally Sustainable Economic Development

Historically, much of Northern Australia existed as a complex mosaic of land traditionally managed by hundreds of indigenous clans. However, colonization left these clans dispossessed of their lands in the 19th and 20th centuries, interrupting natural patterns of environmental stewardship, particularly indigenous fire management that had developed over more than 40,000 years. Without this traditional management, the savannas of Northern Australia have become subject to more wildfires late in the dry season, which burn more intensely, damage habitat for native plants and animals, and release higher levels of harmful greenhouse gases. More recently, large areas of land have been returned to the management control of indigenous people; Native Title and other forms of indigenous tenure and rights now cover more than 60 percent of the northern

savannas. These underlying rights have served as an important base for TNC's work with indigenous partners to secure sustainable financing and to support the associated institutional and governance systems needed to sustain land-based enterprises.

TNC's Northern Australia program is supporting indigenous Australians as they manage their traditional lands and renew and strengthen their connection to Country. Indigenous partners engage in participatory planning for their territories, called Healthy Country Planning (adapted from Conservation Action Planning by traditional owners in Australia to better fit their context and priorities). Healthy Country Planning enables them to envision a future for their lands with economic opportunity that aligns with their cultural priorities. Indigenous ranger programs employ local people and include training in land management and habitat restoration so that traditional knowledge and modern science are combined for lasting results. Rangers protect and restore ecological health through programs such as fencing, cultural site protection, weed eradication, plant and animal surveys, feral animal eradication, soil conservation, and regeneration of threatened flora and fauna species. Restoration of traditional fire management practices is a key land management tool, helping to restore and maintain the area's rich biodiversity and to protect important cultural sites and environmental features. Simultaneously, by avoiding destructive late season wildfire, it reduces greenhouse gas emissions and enables the generation of carbon credits, which are sold for income through Australia's regulatory carbon market. These activities on indigenous lands have resulted in the avoided release of 8.8 million tons of carbon dioxide across 47.4 million acres (19.3 million hectares) and the generation of \$100 million in carbon finance, with plans to expand the model across Northern Australia.

Skills, management capacity, and governance arrangements developed through ranger programs and carbon abatement enterprises have also provided a foundation for developing additional income generation activities that support sustainable management. One example is undertaking fee-for-service activities such as weed control, feral animal control, biosecurity protection, and wildlife surveys for neighboring landowners, government agencies, and the resources industry. Others include developing ecotourism and cultural tourism opportunities and developing bush food enterprises. Income from such sustainable management practices supports indigenous ranger jobs, contributes to sustainable financing of land management and conservation works, and provides an important foundation for future economic development activities based on culturally appropriate management of land resources.

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