

## GEF Small Grants Programme

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

#### COLOMBIA

#### Global Context

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

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



The Cerro Yagé – a sacred place in Ceima Cachivera, Vaupés, Colombia

#### Goals

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

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



The Arhuaco People of Santa Maria Sierra Nevada is one of the IP groups supported by the ICCA-GSI to address lack of territorial control and agricultural frontier expansion, among others.

#### Country Programme Strategy

Colombia is one of the world's "megadiverse" countries, hosting close to 10% of the planet's biodiversity. It is the world's richest country in aquatic resources, with its large watersheds feeding into 4 massive sub-continental basins of the Amazon, Orinoco, Caribbean, Magdalena-Cauca and the Pacific. With 314 types of ecosystems, Colombia possesses a rich complexity of ecological, climatic, biological and ecosystem components. Its Andean ecosystems host several high biodiversity areas marked by endemic species, followed by the Amazon rainforests and the humid ecosystems in the Chocó biogeographical area. Thus, Colombia's biodiversity is not only important for the nation's natural heritage and the preservation of unique species in the world, it is the foundation for economic development, human welfare and social equality.

However, a substantial part of these ecosystems has been transformed for agriculture, mainly in the Andean and Caribbean regions. Almost 95% of the country's dry forests have been reduced from their original cover, including about 70% of

Andean forests. According to Colombia's National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP), the main threats to

#### For more information contact:

**Ana Beatriz Barona**, National Coordinator, Small Grants Programme (SGP) in Colombia

Email: [ana.barona@undp.org](mailto:ana.barona@undp.org)

[www.sgp.undp.org/](http://www.sgp.undp.org/)

biodiversity conservation include *increasing social inequality; internal armed conflict for more than five decades; reprimarization of the economy; the illegal drug trade; weak access policy and titling; implementation of extensive livestock and agricultural models. Such factors contribute to habitat degradation, changes in land use, increased presence of invasive species, climate change, overconsumption of services and general pollution dynamics. ... intrinsic elements that threaten biodiversity protection in Colombia... include a lack of political priority of environmental issues in national and sectorial policies, undesired effects of macroeconomic policies, conflict with indigenous rights and traditional knowledge, and conflicts due to a lack of coordination regarding land-use planning that takes place at various state levels.*

As such, the SGP launched the ICCA-GSI in Colombia in 2016 to expand the support to ICCAs. Building on the SGP's country programme strategy (CPS) in Colombia that focus on the community management of biodiversity and climate change as well as sustainable production, entrepreneurship and green businesses, Colombia's ICCA strategy aims to increase ICCA recognition through (i) capacity building on ICCA self-strengthening processes, (ii) awareness-raising on ICCA importance and challenges in national, regional and local levels; and (iii) analysis of legal and policies relating to ICCAs.

The ICCA-GSI portfolio of projects in *Colombia* encompass a great cultural and ecosystemic diversity of territories protected under indigenous, afrocolombian and peasant systems of governance. Upon receiving more than 475 proposals for ICCA projects, approximately 33% of 32 approved projects are funded by the ICCA-GSI and the balance by SGP's national resources. The main activities include (i) supporting the self-strengthening processes through diverse strategies in defined, desired and disrupted ICCAs; (ii) providing enabling environments for grassroots discussions about the critical aspects of ICCA such as governance, territorial connection, conservation and wellbeing; (iii) organizing knowledge fairs for collective discussions and learnings among organizations; (iv) increasing awareness on the ICCA concept through culturally appropriate materials such as video and leaflets, built on documentation from field visits. In November 2018, the Colombian ICCA network has been established by 17 indigenous, afrocolombian and peasant organizations. The network's strengthening process will be continually supported by the SGP in capacity building, policy dialogues and global ICCA registry processes.

## Project Portfolio

Project Name	Implementation Period
Spiritual and shamanic protection for the conservation of high value and special management places. Indigenous community, Caquetá.	July 2017-December 2018
Development of a 'safeguarding' policy on Arhuaco, Kankuamo, Kogui and Wiwa knowledge and wisdom based on the Law of Origin and Santa Marta's Sierra Nevada sacred places system supporting the Special Safeguard Plan with the Ministry of Culture. Indigenous community, Magdalena.	August 2017 – December 2018
From Nariño's south: Thinking of Earth as a Territory for Peace. Peasant community, Nariño.	July 2017-December 2018
Platform for exchange of experiences in territory management from a local perspective	June 2017-December 2018
Project of environmental education strategies implementation and pedagogy for ecosystems conservation in the municipality Serranía El Pinche, Argelia, and Cauca. (Peasant community, Cauca)	July 2017-December 2018
Strengthening of traditional wisdom and flavours as a strategy for reinsure the prevalence of the ancestral culture in Rio Guají and Bajo Guapi's communities in the municipality of Guapi. Afrocolombian community, Cauca	July 2017-December 2018
Support of the internal dialogue and strengthening of self-government authorities, improving the community's self-consciousness. (Indigenous community, Antioquia)	July 2017-December 2018
How to reinforce a peaceful culture amidst adversity. (Afrocolombian community, Cauca)	July 2017-December 2018
Strengthening of the government and their insight regarding Embera's Shelter natural areas in Chami, Cañamomo, and Lomapieta. (Indigenous community, Caldas)	July 2017-December 2018
Traditional territorial defence, biodiversity protection and socio-cultural subsistence of Arhuaco de la Sierra Nevada indigenous people. (Indigenous community, Cesar)	July 2017-December 2018
Developing a policy document and regulatory framework from ICCA's experiences in the Colombian Amazon	August 2017-December 2018

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[www.sgp.undp.org/](http://www.sgp.undp.org/)