

## GEF Small Grants Programme

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

#### Morocco

#### 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 Apiary of Inzerki, *Taddart* or *Guerram* in Berber language, has 42 rights holders for the preservation of environmental, cultural and social heritage.

#### 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.

#### Country Programme Strategy

Morocco's biodiversity includes more than 24,000 animal species and 7,000 plant species, representing high species diversity and endemism rates, and are IUCN priority sites for conservation in the Mediterranean region. It also hosts two out of the eleven areas designated in the Mediterranean biodiversity hotspots classification: the Moroccan Atlas and Rif mountains. The country's biodiversity play a crucial role in various sectors. According to the CBD, the agricultural sector *employs 40% of the Moroccan population and represents 18% of exports and 13% of the GDP*. Additionally, *the agricultural ecosystems are spread over 8.7 million hectares, hosting a rich variety of local races supported by traditional knowledge and practices*. Yet such biodiversity is increasingly threatened by urbanization, deforestation, overgrazing and over-utilization and is further exacerbated by climate change impacts.

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Inzerki community members plant aromatic and medicinal plants (AMP) to reduce the overuse of forests' AMPs.

In 2015, Morocco revised its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), including a new strategy in recognizing the contribution of local communities' traditional knowledge (TK) to biodiversity conservation. Morocco's indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) have used various forms of collective management on several territories and natural resources for centuries. Such customary modes of organization have contributed to the preservation of these areas. However, these practices are continually threatened by (i) the loss of traditional know-how in natural resource conservation due to the declining trend of inter-generational transfer; (ii) the lack of livelihood options to ensure the continuity of these practices; (iii) the low recognition of these practices by local institutions; and (iv) the lack of specific national legislation for the recognition of traditional conservation practices.

To this end, the ICCA-GSI portfolio of projects in Morocco aims to integrate IPLCs' sustainable practices by establishing a national strategic framework (institutional, legal and political) that support the recognition and appropriate protection of ICCAs. In 2016, a national scoping study was undertaken to ascertain the characteristics of various ICCAs, to identify potential sites for the ICCA-GSI emblematic projects and to establish an ICCA typology at the country level. In 2017, emblematic projects were designed to support IPLCs' conservation efforts through the following activities: (i) ICCA profiling including taking inventory of species, spatial mapping and development of management plans; (ii) documentation and rehabilitation of the ICCA traditional practices and governance institutions; (iii) awareness-raising on ICCAs and its clear linkages to sustainable livelihoods; and (iv) application of the ICCA Security Index.

The creation of a national ICCA network has been initiated and continues to bring together communities, civil society organizations, academia and other resource persons who are strongly committed to ICCAs. Using a participatory approach, several regional and national awareness-raising workshops on the importance of supporting ICCAs are provided to multi-level actors. Lastly, a study to analyze the legal framework governing the ICCAs in Morocco was launched in 2018.

## Project Portfolio

Project Name	Implementation Period
Strategic Support to Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas and Territories (ICCA) in Morocco	July 2016-June 2019
Legal analysis to assess the impact of laws, policies and institutional frameworks on ICCAs in Morocco	October 2018 - April 2019
Rehabilitation of the ancestral practices and traditional structures of governance of the perturbed ICCA of Idaougnidif (South of Morocco)	July 2017 – November 2019
Preservation of the ecosystem services and protection of the biggest traditional collective Apiary in the world, the Inzerki apiary (as a natural and cultural heritage)	July 2017 – May 2019
Project for the safeguarding of the socio-ecological heritage of the territory of the Ait Hsein through the rehabilitation of the practice of the Agdal	July 2017 – May 2019
Agroecology and biodiversity restoration via cultural landscape management in the High Atlas (Imegdale Territory)	July 2017 – May 2019
Conservation of the Agdal of the Oukaimeden through the rehabilitation and enhancement of traditional practices and customary bodies	July 2017 – June 2018
Preservation of the service of the Oasis ecosystem of Tighfert through the facilitation of the intergenerational transfer and the reinforcement of the ancestral community institutions	July 2017 – May 2019

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