



acba
African CSOs
Biodiversity Alliance

WEBINAR REPORT

THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES (OECMS)

ISSUE 1 - 31 MAY 2021

*African and Chinese Perspectives
towards the post-2020 Global
Biodiversity Framework*

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BACKGROUND

Africa is home to almost a quarter of the world's biodiversity ¹, including mega-biodiverse South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania ². Protected areas have been a boon for biodiversity across Africa, but their success has been limited due to pre-existing degradation of habitats for example. Additionally, adapting global protected area targets locally may diminish ambition to ensure the optimal designation of protected acreage in some landscapes. For this and other reasons, despite protecting 14.4% of its total land area and 3% of its marine territories, African countries face alarming rates of biodiversity loss.

As one of the 17 mega-biodiversity countries, China is also a fundamental participant in global conservation. Experiencing unprecedented economic growth, the country has experienced unique challenges to protect its biodiversity. China's urban population increased from 18% in 1978 to 60.6% in 2020, with serious problems emerging due to overcrowding, air and water pollution and environmental degradation.

Protection in the 21st century is compelled to address urban, peri-urban, rural and pristine wildlands as significant biodiversity are outside of protected areas, with missed opportunities to protect areas around IPLC habitats and areas the Aichi targets failed to consider critical to biodiversity. For this, the buy-in of communities living with biodiversity is fundamental. Other effective, area-based conservation measures (OECMs) are increasingly seen as capable of reconciling area-based protection for biodiversity gains and benefits to people. OECMs apply to rural and urban communities and enable local jurisdictions to contribute and participate in conservation efforts. Some of the OECMs that may be considered include:

- Convivial conservation where nature flourishes with people, and all nature is under some form of conservation;
- Locally-led conservation in civic protected areas, where citizens are meaningfully codesign approaches, derive benefits and can be accountable to how nature is used;
- Ecosystem-based adaptation approaches which centre long-term views in working with nature to bring about environmental and human well-being benefits; and
- Restoration of degraded (currently low-value) areas which complements protected areas to reverse trends in biodiversity loss given that majority of people live where ecosystems have been altered and degraded.

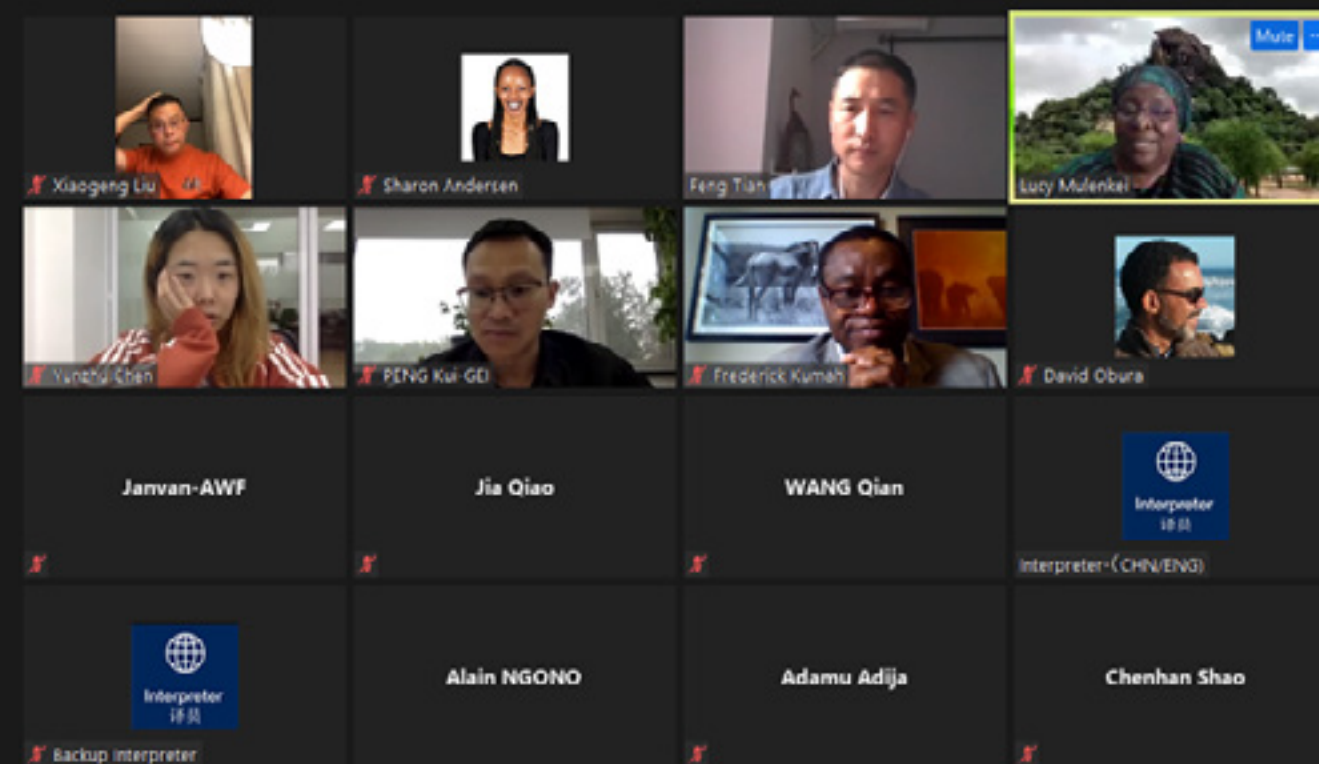
PROCEEDINGS

The Africa CSOs Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA) in collaboration with China's Civil Society Alliance for Biodiversity Conservation (CSABC) hosted this virtual discussion on Zoom and Facebook Live, on 31st May 2021 from 10:00 to 12:00 EAT. The webinar was led by:

Moderator: Fred Kwame Kumah	Speakers:	David Obura Xiaogeng Liu Lucy Mulenkei Yunzhu Chen	Discussants Adamu Adija Feng Tian
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The aim of the webinar was to share lessons learned and best practices from Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) as practiced by IPLCs, and their contributions to the global goals of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The discussion brought together CSO professionals, related stakeholders from the ACBA and CSABC networks, and African, Chinese, and other Public engaged in Africa-China relations, biodiversity conservation, and environmental civil society. The following outcomes were sought:

- A common understanding of the importance of conservation in areas under the control of IPLCs;
- Appreciation for how community empowerment enhances the potential for OECMs in support of sustainable livelihoods; and
- To highlight how conservations approaches outside protected areas deliver biodiversity gains. The dialogue opened with a brief introduction to ACBA, CSABC, and their partnership towards Africa-China collaboration among biodiversity CSOs.



¹ <https://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo4/outlook-africa-en.pdf>
² <https://news.mongabay.com/2016/05/top-10-biodiverse-countries/>

HIGHLIGHTS

1. The African continent and China were historically and continue to be home to numerous IPLCs. Therefore, it is important for the two to continue to share lessons
2. It is important to understand local governance systems and relationships with nature and ensure that IPLCs are consulted in decisions around changing land use patterns
3. OECMs should not become another path to fortress conservation and for areas traditionally owned and under local communities and indigenous peoples' leadership to be converted, with their exclusion. This requires legislation and policies that protect the rights and responsibilities of IPLCs and strengthen local institutions and leadership.
4. The impacts of biodiversity loss on IPLCs ultimately depends on the dynamics of the socio-ecological system and how this system is affected by drivers of biodiversity loss such as consumption and production patterns, climate change, extractive industries and global trade. Therefore, solutions will require system-wide responses.
5. National laws and policies should recognise traditional knowledge in the development of solutions for people and nature.



WAY FORWARD:

1. CSOs should seek to consistent be trusted and equal partners with IPLCs, rather playing an intermediary role in achieving the goals of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). Collaboration moving forward will involve:
 - o Sharing of lessons among IPLCs and CSOs, not just exclusively among CSOs
 - o Supporting the recovery of IPLCs, given that they have been severely impacted by COVID-19. CSOs should mobilize international support to help them cope with the impacts
2. Communities are crucial recipients of funding for biodiversity. Continued underfunding of IPLC initiatives ultimately undermines the viability and effectiveness of solutions for nature, including those for formal protected areas
3. The role of urbanization in nature's decline must be addressed. Urban areas have a significant ecological footprint, so it is important to understand how they impact nature.

Session I was led by David Obura and Xiaogeng Liu who shared insights from their work with local communities adjacent to marine and terrestrial landscapes respectively.



SESSION I

David Obura – CORDIO EA

The discussion focused on the role of local action in shared spaces to achieve people and nature positive outcomes.

Dr. Obura highlighted key outlooks on the implications of governance and financing of, and benefits from protected areas. With ACBA's support to the reversal of nature's decline worldwide, propositions for African contexts are to pursue integrated targets across people and nature as they're inseparable, articulate and guided by nature's benefits, including ecosystem services, and rights to nature's custodians. He closed by positing the way forward, underpinned by the concept of shared earth – shared ocean.

David Obura – CORDIO EA

Mr Xiaogeng Liu spoke of his work Laohegou since 2011. Laohegou is the first social fund-raising management and government-supervised protected area in Sichuan Province. It took 3 years to select sites, land, and government approvals and in 2014, Laohegou Nature Conservation Center was officially established in Pingwu County. The center operates as a partnership between the Pingwu County government and Paradise Foundation, with a 50-year agreement governing the trust which manages 110 km2 of forest land. While Laohegou has been successful with reducing poaching, one major challenge the center has experienced is logging.

From customized agriculture, nature education, to more comprehensive community projects, the center has continued to invest in livelihoods and community support. Future priorities include to continue to engage communities in new surrounding villages to engage all communities around the Reserve, create a tight buffer zone to the Old Creek, reinforce the conservation force, and to conclusively end poaching in the region.

Adamu Adija - African Indigenous Women's Organization - Southern Africa

Adamu Adija shared her reflections from her experiences as an Indigenous person working in conservation. She highlighted the important role that OECMs play for IPLCs, given the limitations of protected areas in reconciling IPLCs' approaches to conservation. She highlighted proposed target 2 of the post-2020 GBF as an area where the inclusion of OECMs will enhance the positive contributions of IPLCs to nature, as well as deliver nature positive outcomes.

Securing nature 'from the ground up' – promoting local action in shared spaces to meet nature-people-positive goals

a kinder and more empathic conservation model

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SESSION II

Lucy Mullenkei – Indigenous Information Network

Lucy Mullenkei highlighted that all regions of Africa are home to indigenous peoples who are fundamental custodians of critical biodiversity. Ms. Mullenkei reflected on the limited recognition of IPLCs contributions to conservation despite IPLCs historically valuing and promoting conservation often against then contemporary trends harmful to biodiversity. Building on Dr. Obura's discussion of integrated targets, and the role of upholding the rights of IPLCs, Ms. Mullenkei emphasized that both are crucial given the propensity for IPLCs to be the first to be displaced or negatively impacted by conservation approaches that require a separation between people and the biodiversity around them for protection.

Yunzhu Chen – Global Environmental Institute (GEI)

Ms Yunzhu Chen presented on GEI's work with community conservation in Myanmar. This project enables the protection of critical ecosystems. Civil society organizations from the national to community-based level participate in coordination to deliver on four elements: climate aid goods, sustainable community funds, community development and conservation. Besides delivering on the project outcomes, there has been the spillover benefit of Myanmar receiving more financing towards climate change adaptation and mitigation from the Chinese government.

Feng Tian – Paradise Foundation

Mr. Feng Tian highlighted the parallels between African and Chinese imperatives for conservation. He pointed out the historical imperative for IPLCs in Africa and China, who have lived alongside biodiversity and learned to protect and conserve it long before the current challenges posed by climate change and unsustainable development. Given what biodiversity means to these communities, and their knowledge of its conservation, engagement with them is fundamental.

CONCLUSION

In his concluding remarks Fred Kwame Kumah thanked the speakers and discussants for bringing in diverse perspectives which demonstrate the importance of empowering communities to conserve along the spaces they live in and around. With 40% of biodiversity around IPLCs, more effort to uphold their rights and in other ways empower these communities, will ensure that global conservation efforts bear fruit.

The webinar attracted over 50 attendees, with encouraging from African countries, China and beyond. Many thanks to the ACBA membership for their participation and sharing with their networks. The recording of the full webinar can be accessed [here](#).



ANNEX

AGENDA

Time	Time	Speaker/Moderator
Introduction (10 min)		
15:00 -15:05	Overview of ACBA & CSABC partnership	Mr. Fred Kwame Kumah
15:05-15:10	Housekeeping and Agenda	
Session I: (35 min)		
15:10-15:25	Securing nature 'from the ground up' – promoting local action in shared spaces to meet nature-people-positive goals	Dr. David Obura
15:25-15:40	10-year Review of a Pilot Social Welfare Protection Area Project in Laohegou	Mr. Xiaogeng Liu
15:40-15:45	Discussant I reflections	Ms. Adamu Adija
Session II: (35 min)		
15:50-16:05	The Role of IPLCs' Conservation Efforts and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework	Ms Lucy Mulenkei
16:05-16:20	Community Participation in Conservation and Livelihoods Improvement – Myanmar as a case of the CCCA model	Ms. Yunzhu Chen
16:20-16:25	Discussant II reflections	Mr. Feng Tian
Session III: (35 min)		
16:25-16:55	Q&A	Mr. Fred Kwame Kumah
16:55-17:00	Closing Remarks	



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