GEF-7 Inclusive Conservation Initiative
Overview

The GEF-7 Inclusive Conservation Initiative (ICI) will support indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in their continuing efforts to safeguard Earth’s natural ecosystems, recognizing the historical roles they have played in nature conservation. The ICI will work inclusively with IPLCs, their regional and local organizations, governments, NGOs, civil society and others to further strengthen their capacity to conserve globally significant biodiversity and ecosystems.

While IPLCs have been effective stewards of their natural resources, mounting pressure over their lands and territories requires additional support for the adequate management of specific landscapes and seascapes. ICI, by combining substantial investments in these locations will help replicate and amplify local results through global capacity-building, policy influence and demonstration of large-scale impact.

The Inclusive Conservation Initiative (ICI) will support IPLC-designed and -led activities that protect biodiversity and result in other global environmental benefits. Supervision and technical guidance will be provided by Conservation International (CI) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), serving as joint GEF Implementing Agencies. Both organizations bring their decades of collective experience working with IPLCs, as well as their regional and global expertise, to the implementation of the GEF Inclusive Conservation Initiative. A concept (Project Information Form) for the Inclusive Conservation Initiative was approved by the GEF Council in December 2019. CI and IUCN now have one year to work through a participatory design process to prepare a full project proposal for the ICI.

ICI Objective: Enhance Indigenous Peoples’ and Local Communities’ (IPLCs) efforts to steward land, waters and natural resources to deliver global environmental benefits.

The Inclusive Conservation Initiative (ICI) project will support IPLCs to secure and enhance their stewardship over an estimated area of at least 3.6 million hectares of landscapes/seascapes and/or territories with high biodiversity and irreplaceable ecosystems. It will provide resources, enhance capacities, and support ‘hands-on’ experiential learning that will enable IPLCs to define and demonstrate an inclusive model for conservation where IPLCs are recognized and empowered as decision-makers and key actors at all levels of conservation action, from local action on the ground, to national policies that impact their rights, to global fora that define conservation and sustainable development targets and approaches for environmental action. Resources approved by GEF Council include USD 22,535,780 for project activities. 80% of this total will go to site-based investments, known as Component 1, while 20% goes to Components 2, 3 and 4 that focus on cross-cutting, global activities.

IPLC organizations will take the lead in identifying local priorities, developing inclusive, culturally appropriate processes for decision-making, strategies, and implementing action. It is expected that there will be between seven and ten landscapes or seascapes for investment under Component 1.
The four ICI components, with interconnected outputs that mutually support outcomes from local to global levels, include:

**Component 1: Local Action to deliver Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs)** – will provide direct financial support to IPLC-led initiatives in priority areas that achieve global environmental benefits through improved large-scale management of IPLC lands, territories and resources.

**Component 2: Global IPLC Capacity Building** – will establish the platforms, peer learning networks and knowledge resources for enhanced IPLC capacity, project and financial management skills, and design of sustainable financing mechanisms.

**Component 3: IPLC Leadership in International Environmental Policy** - will enable IPLC representatives to amplify their voices and influence in the international policy decisions that create either enabling or constraining conditions for on-ground inclusive conservation efforts.

**Component 4: Inclusive Conservation Knowledge to Action** – will support IPLC organizations to distil and share knowledge regarding ‘inclusive conservation’ models to demonstrate large-scale impact and generate support for IPLC-led conservation.

For more information on the GEF-7 Inclusive Conservation Initiative, please find the Inclusive Conservation Initiative Project Information Form [here](#) or visit [www.thegef.org](http://www.thegef.org) and search inclusive conservation.

**Overview of the process to develop the full project**
The GEF Inclusive Conservation Initiative was approved by the GEF Council in December 2019; CI/IUCN have approximately one year to develop the full project for final endorsement by the GEF CEO. Over the course of 2020, key steps to develop the full Inclusive Conservation project proposal are anticipated to include:
1. Establishment and convening of an Interim Steering Committee: *January 2020 and ongoing*
2. Robust stakeholder engagement with IPLCs and other partners: *January to December 2020*
3. Design of Component 1: *February to October 2020*
   - Call for Expressions of Interest (EoI) to IPLC organizations: *March to May 2020*
   - Desk Analysis of geographies complements EoI process: *March to June 2020*
   - Selection of Component 1 sub-projects: *June to July 2020*
   - Development of full sub-project proposals: *August to October 2020*
4. Design of Components 2, 3 and 4: *June to October 2020*
5. Partnership Development and Co-Finance: *January to October 2020*
6. Consolidation and preparation of full project document: *October to December 2020*
7. Final revisions in early 2021 for March 2021 deadline.

**Contact:** info@inclusiveconservationinitiative.org