

MEETING OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF AFRICAN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES (IPLCs) AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATIONS (CBOs) ON BIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY PROTOCOLS (BCPs)

**CAPE TOWN
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NATURAL JUSTICE

**Access and
Benefit
Sharing**

The ABS Capacity Development Initiative for Africa

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INTRODUCTION

On the 2nd and 3rd of September 2010, Natural Justice, with support from the ABS Capacity Development Initiative for Africa, hosted and facilitated a meeting of Representatives of African Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) and Community Based Organisations on Bio-cultural Community Protocols (BCPs). The meeting was held at the Cape Town Lodge in Cape Town, South Africa.

BACKGROUND TO THE MEETING

The objective of the Working Group on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS), under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), is to develop an International Protocol on ABS. Within these negotiations there has and continues to be discussion on the recognition, support and protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) over their biological resources and knowledge. African countries involved in these negotiations, known as “The African Group”, have proposed that for the purposes of this International Protocol on ABS, any access to traditional knowledge (TK) of IPLCs shall be in line with the “community protocols” of these communities. This proposal was supported by the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB), African IPLC representatives to the ABS negotiations and other parties involved in the negotiations on ABS.

Recognition of community protocols as a means to secure IPLC rights over their TK and biological resources paves the way for genuine legal pluralism where community protocols embodying customary norms and laws of IPLCs are recognised in international and national law. Such an explicit recognition is thereby an acknowledgement of the right of communities to self-determine the terms of engagement with other stakeholders, which is unprecedented in treaty law. While there have been similar efforts under the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) African Model Law, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO 169, these are soft law and non-binding on States making the emerging consensus around ‘community protocols’ in the ABS Protocol negotiations all the more momentous.

African Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and IPLC representatives have emphasised the usefulness of BCPs as a ‘rights-based approach’ (RBA) to free prior and informed consent (FPIC) of IPLCs when dealing with a range of issues, including Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD), Protected Areas and Livestock Keepers Rights etc. It was also noted that rather than fragmenting community concerns that relate to biodiversity under a range of legal regimes requiring different compliance mechanisms, BCPs could function as a pivotal community developed tool that lays down the terms of any engagement with the community. A community developed rights-based tool of this nature could well become the lynchpin of any law or policy that requires the FPIC of communities.

With this emerging legal landscape in mind, as well as the growing support for the use of community protocols as an effective RBA to secure the rights of IPLCs, the “Meeting of Representatives of African Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and Community Based Organisations on Bio-cultural Community Protocols” was organized. The meeting

followed the “Second African Indigenous and Local Communities Preparatory Meeting on Access and Benefit Sharing and Traditional Knowledge” that was also held in Cape Town from the 30th of August to the 1st of September 2010.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

The objectives of the meeting were:

- 1) To review the existing RBAs to biological resources and TK that participants are currently engaged in, what is/not working.
 - 2) To evaluate the potential of BCPs to augment existing RBAs to securing the ways of life and FPIC of IPLCs with respect to any activities undertaken by the States or non-community actors that impact a community’s resources and knowledge.
 - 3) To collectively discuss the viability and utility of establishing an African collective of representatives of existing IPLC and CBO networks that will coordinate activities, share experiences, create linkages and develop capacity on the use of BCPs at community, national and regional levels.
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PARTICIPANTS

The BCP meeting consisted of 35 participants that included:

- African IPLC representatives and representative organizations (from 10 African countries - Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Burundi, Benin and Senegal);
- 6 resource people contributed to the discourse on various RBAs;
- Members of Natural Justice and the ABS Capacity Development Initiative for Africa.

The participants that attended the BCP Meeting were invited due to their direct involvement with African IPLCs, understanding of issues facing IPLCs and their use of, independently or through networks, various rights-based approaches to address these issues. An important aspect of the meeting was to allow participants to exchange ideas and share experiences.

Natural Justice also invited various participants to be part of panel discussions in order to: a) present on their work with RBAs to biological resources and TK and b) describe how this work related to the discussion on BCPs.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for the full participant list.

Participants were provided with:

1. Participant information booklet
2. BCP Concept Note
3. BCP DVD “Securing Community Rights to Biodiversity and Traditional Knowledge: Protocols, Guidelines, Materials and Laws”

OPENING STATEMENT: *Fostering linkages and areas of convergence*

Whilst one of the primary aims of the meeting was the sharing and review of existing work on RBAs to biological resources and TK, during the first day of discussions, the importance of fostering the links between the various thematic areas in which IPLCs are involved, such as ABS, Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs), REDD and TK, became increasingly evident.

When engaging in the discourse on community rights, it is important to recognise the impact that each of the thematic areas will have on the other and therefore impact the rights of communities over their territories, resources and knowledge. This ripple effect is demonstrative of the interdependence of the areas related to community rights, which may otherwise appear to be quite disparate.

BIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY PROTOCOLS AND ABS

Dr. Andreas Drews, Co-ordinator of the ABS Capacity Development Initiative for Africa

A background to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the current negotiations on the International Regime on ABS was provided. BCPs could be used to link formal laws and customary laws and to ensure participation of IPLCs in the national decision-making on ABS agreements. It would be very beneficial for communities if BCPs would be supported by national authorities and recognised by national ABS regulations.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACHES PANEL DISCUSSIONS

1. What do rights seek to protect?

Any approach to rights should be moored to the values and norms that underpin a community. There are currently a number of international and national processes in which communities are engaging with the rights discourse by affirming their values and norms. The members of the first panel session gave examples of tools or processes that assert a community's values and norms in order to affirm their rights over their resources, land and knowledge. Such examples demonstrate an attempt to firstly, gain external recognition of the values and norms that embody a traditional way of life and then utilising this enhanced recognition, strengthen their connection with external processes to the benefit of the community. For without these values and norms that define a community, what is the struggle for IPLC rights actually seeking to protect?

The Story of Origin by Tetu Maingi from Porini Welfare Association, Kenya

One of the aims of *the story of origin* is reviving the ancestry and TK of communities while concurrently re-constructing the social relationships of its people. In this process eco-cultural mapping is used to provide an outline of the past through the ecological knowledge

of elders, build a common understanding within the entire community and lay the foundations for the future ecological governance of the community.

BCPs have recently been introduced and used together with the story of origin process, which both serve to strengthen community cohesion, self-actualisation, self-determination and good ecological governance.

Participatory Cultural Mapping by Million Bellay from Melca Mahiber, Ethiopia

Participatory Three Dimensional Modelling (P3DM) is a mechanism aimed at revitalising and mobilising indigenous local knowledge for better natural resource management. Such a participatory techniques also plays an important role in fostering community cohesion (i.e. involving all community members – elders and young) and the self-actualisation of a community.

Endogenous Development and Rights Based Approaches by Bern Guri from Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organisational development (CIKOD), Ghana

Endogenous Development is an approach based on local peoples own criteria of development. It is a process that is designed, led and controlled by communities to improve material, social, cultural and spiritual well-being, which is based on local and appropriate external resources.

CIKOS is currently using BCPs as part of the endogenous development process. Endogenous Development was described as a process for communities to identify their capacity and BCPs as a tool for communities to source their capacity and mainstream their own development to realise their vision of well-being. CIKOD is now using BCPs as part of the endogenous development process.



2. What are the different kinds of community rights to biodiversity?

Whilst the first panel session provided examples of processes that seek to strengthen the values and norms that communities are seeking to protect, the second panel session highlighted the various rights that can be utilised to protect the values of a community.

The discussion also highlighted how communities can engage with the law and policy processes, nationally and internationally, to ensure that they are able to secure their rights in order to affirm their pasts, secure their present and self-determine their future.

Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries Programme (REDD) and Rights-Based Approaches: Nigel Crawhall from Indigenous People of Africa Co-ordinating Committee (IPACC), South Africa

REDD offers active stewardship of the forest and within such a mechanism IPLCs have the opportunity to demonstrate their expertise in forest biodiversity and conservation while advancing their rights to a livelihood that is strongly dependent on the forest in which they live. However, discussions around REDD have failed to actively involve IPLCs and this challenge must be addressed.

Community Management of Conservancies and Community Rights: Karen Nott from Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservancy (IRDNC), Namibia

The Himba people, semi-nomadic pastoralists of Kunene, Namibia, have used and have TK pertaining to the *commiphora wildii* (an endemic desert plant.) Resin from the plant is used as a perfume. As a result the community, with support from IRDNC, have developed a conservancy-based enterprise to export the resin of the plant. The community has recently entered into an ABS agreement with a South African company, in which the community will be provided with an additional 10% of the price of the raw material in acknowledgement of the TK. The community has been explicit within any agreements that the TK attached to the use of the resin remains the ownership of the community.

Campaign for Livestock Keepers Rights: Jacob Wanyama from LIFE Network Africa, Kenya

The LIFE Network aims at securing and improving the livelihoods of pastoralist peoples and small-scale livestock keepers by promoting the sustainable use and conservation of local breeds.

The key role that livestock keepers play in preserving the variety of species in livestock is continually undermined through the decrease in areas for grazing and a lack of recognition by governments. The Samburu, a pastoralist community of Northern Kenya and keepers of the Red Maasai sheep, were able to develop a BCP with the aim of clearly stating their role in the creation and custodianship of their breeds and also as a mechanism to engage with the government or third parties desirous of utilizing their breeds.



3. What are the ways to secure community rights?

The law is often compartmentalising various aspects of community life and oftentimes fails to recognise how inter-connected they actually are. Such separation limits our ability to respond to the challenges facing communities. It is therefore critical for CBOs and communities to begin mapping the various international and national forums and co-ordinating strategies to cement and cross leverage rights within these forums. The third panel session therefore presented examples of processes that are being utilised by communities to secure their rights over land, resources and knowledge.

Rights-Based Approaches: The Six Step Process: Juan Carlos Sanchez from IUCN Environmental Law Centre, Germany

The Step Wise Approach (SwA) to RBAs is a mechanism to secure community rights through consideration of both the nature and rights perspectives. In some settings, the needs and rights of communities that are integrally linked to the natural environment are outweighed by conservation measures. The application of the SwA to RBAs is a means to ensure conservation with justice.

The IUCN RBA to Conservation Portal has been designed to improve the understanding and application of a RBA to conservation at international and national levels. The portal also houses a collection of case studies and tools that provide further guidance for implementing a SwA.



Community Contracts and Securing Community Rights: Jerzy Koopman, Counsel Life Science Law, Netherlands

When considering community rights one must realise that all fields of law will have an influence over one another. Therefore, a practical approach to study the law must be adopted and the patchwork of existing laws and conventions to benefit communities' should be canvassed and used within community contracts. BCPs could be used as a basis for a community contract that could then be adapted to a particular or specific situation.

Customary Land Use and Customary Laws: Rachael Knight from the International Development Law Organisation (IDLO), Mozambique

When a community is dispossessed of its land, a community is also dispossessed of its culture, traditional way of life and knowledge. Titling communities may be the fastest, most efficient and equitable way of protecting customary land claims.

To formalise communal land claims a five-step approach may be used:

- Creation and election of a core committee
- Definition of the physical limits of the community
- Establishment of rules for community land administration
- Establishment of a land and natural resource management plan and/or land use and zoning plan
- Following the necessary administrative procedures.

BIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY PROTOCOLS

Bio-cultural Community Protocols: Kabir Bavikatte, Natural Justice

1. Bio-cultural community protocols ("community protocols") are instruments that facilitate culturally rooted, participatory decision-making processes within communities with the aim of asserting rights over their communally managed lands and traditional knowledge.

2. Community protocols are based on communities' customary norms, values, and laws and set out clear terms and conditions to governments and the private, research, and non-profit sectors for engaging with communities and accessing their local resources.
3. Community protocols facilitate conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity by ensuring that decisions regarding communally managed resources rest firmly with the communities who have served as stewards of these resources over many generations.

For the purposes of developing a BCP, "community" can be defined as a group of people that share resources and/or knowledge and may have:

- Shared values
- Shared ethnicity
- Common cause
- Shared activity
- Collective decision-making.

The development of a BCP would usually be triggered by a community's aspiration towards a bio-cultural goal (e.g. to engage with a bio-prospecting opportunity) or a need to defend bio-cultural values (e.g. to secure traditional forest rights from being usurped).

When one is considering good process in the development of a BCP, the factors to be mindful of are:

- A BCP arises within an endogenous development process to realise a state of well-being and therefore carefully integrates in its development process the social, material and spiritual well-being of a community.
- A BCP is a balance between the rights of a community to its ecosystem and its duties toward nurturing this ecosystem.
- A BCP safeguards rights to custodianship of ecosystems.
- A BCP is a tool of interface, developed by communities and is rooted in an understanding of the external systems that impact them. It is strategically deployed to engage with these external systems to secure community well-being.
- BCP development process is an informed process, community led, with clear objectives, rooted in collective decision making, value-based and is not time bound.
- In facilitating the BCP development process, the supporting CBO would be required to raise critical questions and provide the community with the relevant information and networks to successfully develop and use a BCP.



Case Study of the Bushbuckridge Traditional Health Practitioners BCP by Rodney Allan Sibuyi

The Traditional Health Practitioners of Bushbuckridge developed their BCP to protect their biodiversity, TK and customary laws. Their BCP also highlights the certain obligations to conservation and sustainable use that they uphold within the community and the community areas.

The community of traditional healers had faced various challenges, including limited or no access to communal lands, protected areas/conservation areas and reserves. The BCP has been utilised to negotiate access to certain areas that contain important resources for their practices as traditional healers.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION ON BCPs: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND IMPLEMENTATION

The objectives of any BCP and the process of its development are linked. A BCP like customary law should be seen as an evolving open-ended process with short, medium and long-term goals. The goals of a BCP will evolve over time as will its process of continuing development and improvement.

Given that there are growing numbers of communities in Africa and Asia that have developed or are developing BCPs it has become important to critically analyse the methods and content of BCPs. The motivation of doing so would ensure: 1) that communities take ownership of the BCP process; 2) strong standards and process requirements to be set for the development of BCPs; and 3) that best practice is used in the development of BCPs.

Therefore, participants were asked to analyse and respond to four critical issues concerning the BCP process in order to address the abovementioned motivations. Participants were divided into 3 groups and group representatives were then invited to provide their responses and discuss. The critical elements for discussion were in regards to: a) what constitutes a community for a BCP; b) whether claims made in a BCP should be independently supported; c) what the BCP process should involve; and d) the function and role of BCPs.

Participants engaged in open and frank discussion about BCPs and gave broad support to such a community RBA. There was general consensus on what a community would

constitute for the purposes of a BCP however it was acknowledged that it would often be context specific. Whilst claims made by communities should be respected and trusted, participants also felt that independent evidence may assist communities when engaging with external stakeholders. Participants categorically agreed that the process of participation is paramount and this must be inclusive and sensitive to community process. The support of external organisations was welcomed, with the caveat that they are neutral parties to the process and not the drivers of the BCP. Participants also urged caution on the mainstreaming or politicisation of such a tool and questioned its effectiveness if this was to occur.

Community: How to identify the “community” for the purpose of a BCP? (Think of possible criteria and challenges)

- Communities may be defined by:
 - Common origins;
 - Ethnicity;
 - Resources;
 - Place/space;
 - Values;
 - Religion;
 - Relationships;
 - Interests.
 - However, the above are often related to a specific context.
- For the purposes of a BCP, a community should be smaller rather than larger.
- When developing a BCP, entry to the community should always be through legitimate structures, such as chief, clan head, elders, women, youths. It will also be important that the BCP involve all categories of a community.
- Communities should not be defined too narrowly as it could be disadvantageous to a BCP development process.

Claims: Should the claims made by a BCP (on the resources, customary rights, etc of a community) be backed-up by independent research? If so, how can this be achieved? If not, how can the community assert its claims if these are challenged?

- The need for independent research is dependent upon the process from where the claims arose.
- There usually is a need for independent research that must include reference/criteria from the related community.
- The claims of a community should be credible and asserted in an acceptable format.
- Research must be appropriate to the context/objectives of a BCP and conducted in a way that promotes common interests and principles of the community.
- Communities must be careful to select the appropriate researcher in order to avoid being dispossessed of the outcomes.
- Communities should try and obtain copyright over their research findings and determine which information can be disseminated and how. This is the responsibility of the communities.

Process/Facilitation: What should a community-led process towards a BCP look like? (For example: who should be involved, what steps are followed, what should be the role of external organizations, how does the BCP get validated by the community?)

A community-led process to a BCP:

- Should be inclusive, participatory (bring in all groups of a community) and should be community driven. People within the community must feel free to participate.
- The development of the BCP should be conducted in the local language and in line with local values

Who should be involved?

- It should involve interested and affected parties, community members, partners, and resource persons/experts.
- A neutral agent that communities can easily and effectively communicate with. Preferably someone who is known and who has already established trust with the communities. This may include such as local civil society, CBO and/or NGOs.
- Local government structures should also be included.

What should be the role of external organisations?

- It should be the role of the facilitator to mediate between the various stakeholders once the BCP is in place and is being used.
- Outsiders must listen very carefully to the deliberations of the community to fully understand how they would want their BCP to proceed.

Function/Role: What are the advantages and dangers of mainstreaming BCPs (for example through ABS legislation)? How can we ensure recognition and support while avoiding top-down implementation by government agencies?

Advantages

- A BCP will strengthen the social fabric of a community
- It will facilitate transparency and accountability
- A BCP could be used as an effective negotiation tool
- If mainstreamed:
 - BCPs could fill/bridge the gaps between communities and governments.
 - It is an opportunity to describe to other stakeholders who the community is, define relationships within the community and with other groups.

Dangers

- BCPs may become politicised
- BCPs could result in community conflicts
- BCPs may open access to community resources with no benefit sharing
- BCPs could be misused if they are mainstreamed, especially if government wants to facilitate this.
- Trade norms may contradict human rights
- If misused, BCPs may in fact lead to opposite results
- BCPs should be tested with communities before they are implemented further.

BCPs IN AFRICA: NEXT STEPS

Participants were then asked to consider the way forward for BCPs in Africa. To do so, they were again split into 3 groups and asked to consider a set of questions and then report to the plenary on their discussions. This session requested that participants analyse the usefulness of BCPs to communities and to provide suggestions on the further development and recognition of BCPs.

Participants identified a range of possible benefits that BCPs may have for communities, including increased participation in decision making, recognition of customary norms, local development and the conservation of knowledge and resources. However, for communities to be able to fully utilise and gain sufficient benefits from BCPs there must be a clear understanding and recognition of such a mechanism. To assist in this process, CBOs and their networks must also receive training and develop legal capacity.

Q1) How can my organization and the communities we work with benefit from BCPs? How would we use them and towards what aims?

BCPs could be used to:

- Obtain recognition of communal rights, knowledge and ownership
- Promote local development
- Conserve and restore natural resources
- Develop Capacity
- Facilitate economic opportunities
- Serve as a tool that is an integrated element of endogenous development and is also a means for engagement with the outside world
- Strengthen the confidence and identity of communities
- Use community self-organisation within its process
- Enhance relationships within a community
- Help communities to advocate for their bio-cultural rights and defend their lands
- Strengthen the traditional and ecological knowledge of communities
- Serve as a forum for intergenerational transfer of knowledge and enables learning experiences
- State the responsibilities of communities in their relationship with the outside world
- Nationally and Internationally recognise communities

Q2) What can I/ my organisation do to ensure the further development and recognition of BCPs in Africa?

- Communicate information on BCPs with networks – share learning experiences.
- Use other relevant tools e.g. mapping, lobbying etc in tandem with BCPs to push for community rights and land tenure rights
- Personal commitment (networks, institutes, resources, information, research)
- Adapt BCPs to our local contexts as appropriate



Q3) How can we work together to ensure the recognition and implementation of BCPs in Africa? How can we complement each other's strengths? How can we coordinate the use of BCPs in Africa to secure community rights to biodiversity?

- Communicate very clearly what BCPs are about to communities
- Create a database, newsletter, website(s), and an accessible information point
- Create a forum for sharing experiences on the development of BCPs, especially getting first hand experiences from those who have developed them (i.e. Natural Justice) and encourage GTZ to continue supporting the process, as well as the Compas Network.
- Ensure regional connections based on common interests (informal), networks and individual linkages
- Design training modules on the process of BCPs in liaison with other supportive organisations
- Create a list for sharing community experiences on BCPs process with other continents (e.g. Asia and South America)
- Create an enabling environment by engaging with decision makers, local and national governments, local authorities and traditional leaders
- Work with existing networks as much as possible

4) What kind of support do we need to achieve our goals for BCPs? From whom?

- Technical support/assistance and capacity building (Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC), the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA), Indigenous Information Network (IIN), Natural Justice)
- Resources: materials, funds, human resources and further research
- Technical support/Assistance and Capacity building (IPACC, WIMSA, IIN, Natural Justice)
- Natural Justice to co-ordinate the way forward for BCPs in Africa
- Seed grants to assist in the initiation of the BCP processes and seed grants for implementation.
- Supporting the development of an enabling environment
- Financial resources, possibly from GTZ, Dutch Government, Compas Network and African Governments

OUTCOMES OF THE BCP MEETING

One of the benefits of this meeting was that the wide range of work being conducted on RBAs in Africa and the large amount of expertise held by individuals, organisations and networks was abundantly evident. Notwithstanding, participants stated that there is a necessity to consolidate and build on this expertise by continually sharing experiences and lessons within the wider network of organisations. Some of the suggestions to address this issue were; forums for sharing activities, an online database and training on BCPs. However, the importance of sharing these activities with as many people as possible was also enunciated.

Further, participants suggested that there should be an increase in the legal capacity within and available to the networks/organisations. Given that there is an emerging amount of jurisprudence on community rights, especially within international environmental law, it would be key for organisations/networks in Africa to be abreast of this range of rights. This could be achieved through capacity training of CBOs/community representatives, fostering links with local and further training of local lawyers.

A request was made of the ABS Capacity Development Initiative for Africa to support a process that would entail working with the existing networks to enhance the technical expertise of community and CBO representatives. Dr Drews stated to the participants that he would propose to the donors of the ABS Initiative to support such a programme.

The outcomes of this meeting were:

- 1) Participants reported on and shared a variety of case studies and experiences on rights-based approaches related to biological resources and TK and confirmed that BCPs improve and strengthen RBAs.
- 2) Based on the above, BCPs and their strategic value as an RBA to securing the rights of African IPLCs to their natural resources and TK were critically and collectively discussed and analysed. It was agreed that BCPs have a real potential to be used as community developed interface tools to bridge the gaps between IPLCs and the national and international law and policy processes.
- 3) To use the existing networks to facilitate African work on BCPs to allow for greater sharing and learning of experiences.
- 4) It is important to make the information that is generated through such a network/collective accessible to as many people as possible.
- 5) For communities to continue to develop BCPs so that governments recognise and engage with such community-led mechanisms.
- 6) Participants stated that there is a need for greater legal capacity and training so as to build local expertise.

- 7) Participants suggested that it is important to share our experiences in Africa but also learn from the lessons in Asia and Latin America in order to develop good process on BCPs.
- 8) Develop a team of resource people that will assist networks build legal capacity in the local setting.
- 9) Natural Justice was mandated to co-ordinate the process.
- 10) The ABS Capacity Development Initiative for Africa was requested to support the process.



THE WAY FORWARD

Following the in-depth discussion and critical analysis of BCPs throughout the 2-day meeting, participants lent their general support to such a tool as a mechanism that communities can utilise in their struggle for rights over their land, resources, and knowledge. The further development, recognition and implementation of BCPs will however require the continued input and advice of community representatives and CBOs. As part of this ongoing process, it is fundamental that community and CBOs are able to share and build upon their expertise and experiences. At the same time, both communities and CBOs require the legal capacity to be able to link community processes to the national and international legal discourse.

Natural Justice has begun developing a strategy of work based on the suggestions provided at the meeting to begin in 2011. This strategy, with the support of the ABS Capacity Development Initiative for Africa, will fulfill the objectives set out by participants of the BCP meeting, namely: 1) co-ordinate the sharing of information and experiences on BCPs and other rights-based approaches; 2) facilitate the development of legal capacity for community and CBO representatives; and 3) co-ordinate a team of resource people to be involved in this process.

Natural Justice would invite all participants and other organizations interested in being part of this process to add further suggestions and comments.

THANKS

Natural Justice would like to thank all participants for their enthusiasm and insightful advice during the 2-day BCP Meeting, especially all resource personnel for their invaluable contributions to the panel sessions on day one of the meeting. Natural Justice would also like to extend their gratitude to the ABS Capacity Development Initiative for Africa for their integral support and to all the interpreters and Moving Images film crew for their tireless efforts.