



The Natural Resource Governance Tool

Version 2



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Cover: Fisherman on the Sangha river, Republic of Congo.

Credit: M. Berge

Back: Likouala river, Republic of Congo

Credit: M. Gately / WCS

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FOREWORD

During the last decade, the wildlife conservation community has made significant advances in developing robust methods for monitoring progress towards conservation targets (e.g. camera trapping, line transects, etc.), threats (e.g. ranger patrol records, intelligence networks), and livelihoods (e.g. basic necessities surveys, most significant change). However, less progress has been made in developing tools for regularly and credibly monitoring and reporting progress on governance systems that ensure sustainable resource use. Successful wildlife conservation is founded on effective governance systems that are able to establish and enforce compliance with rules and regulations that support sustainable use and conservation of natural resources.

There remains a lack of simple, low-cost, and replicable ways to measure and understand the strengths and weaknesses of groups responsible for the governance of natural resources within a given geographic area. Without access to a suitable governance assessment tool, conservation and development practitioners have no clear sense of the factors most likely to facilitate good governance, and no clear process for identifying how to tackle factors that hinder good governance.

This guide provides one approach that can be used to identify the most important groups with rights to govern natural resources within a geographic area, to establish the factors deemed to be essential elements of good natural resource governance, and to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each governance group. The guide describes an approach and a data collection tool that together constitute a simple, low-cost, expert opinion-based method for assessing natural resource governance groups.

The first version of this guide was published in 2014, and then updated in 2015, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Forestry and Biodiversity Office and the USAID Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). Principal authors included David Wilkie, Michelle Wieland and Diane Detoef (WCS) and Paul Cowles (Pact). Yale Forestry and Environmental Studies students: Marian Vernon, Melissa Arias, Sarah Tolbert, and Hasita Bhammar provided valuable support.

This second version incorporates: a) improved understanding of the power to govern and the addition of diversity as a sub-attribute of authority, b) updated data collection and data management methods using KoboToolBox on tablet computers, and c) revision of the survey instrument to use Likert scale responses. Each of these changes were informed by extensive field experience of implementing Version 1 of the Natural Resources Governance Tool (NRGT) in Central Africa and other locations around the world.

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Dr. Adam Behrendt provided inputs early on in the process that set the stage for the guide's evolution to where it is today. Finally, pulling the guide together, piloting it and presenting it to an international audience were accomplished through a close collaboration between WCS, Pact Inc., and AWF with additional inputs from WWF and FFI. Principal authors include Dr. David Wilkie (WCS) and Paul Cowles (Pact). Appendices and database developers include Dr. David Wilkie, Dr. Michelle Wieland and Diane Detoef of WCS, and Thomas Maschler of WRI, through the financial support of USAID's CARPE program.

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Glossary of terms

Accountability: the belief or understanding that a governance group and each individual within the group is a) required to fulfill certain responsibilities and b) is seen to fulfill those responsibilities. Most importantly the governance group must be seen to be downwardly accountable for their actions and responsive to the interests of natural resource users and rights holders.

Authority: the perception of natural resource users and rights holders that a governance group genuinely represents their interests and has legal or customary jurisdiction to govern “their” natural resources.

Capacity: the knowledge and skills to decide what to do and the financial and technical resources to implement those decisions.

Effectiveness of natural resource governance: when decisions made and rules enforced by a governance group actually result in better natural resources governance (i.e., long-term ecological and economic productivity). Effective long-term sustainable management of natural resources is predicated on governance that is representative and democratic.

Diversity: the explicit inclusion of women and minorities in the decision-making process.

Fairness: the perception by natural resource users and rights holders about the degree to which they feel that rules regulating access to and use of natural resources are equitable in terms of who benefits and who incurs the costs and that the enforcement of these rules is applied equally across all individuals and groups.

Institutional framework: the set of formal government rules, regulations, and policies that enable a governance group’s ability to sustainably manage natural resources. Absent this national enabling legislation the governance group lacks formal authority to govern.

Institutions: the formal or customary norms, policies, rules, and regulations, all of which are tools that are available to a governance group to define access to and regulate the use of natural resources within their jurisdiction. See Box ‘Institutions versus governance groups’ on page 13.

Knowledge and skills: the basic understanding of a) the biological, economic, historical, socio-political, and managerial factors that put in jeopardy the longterm sustainability of natural resource use; b) the policies and practices that would need to be put in place to remedy the situation so that valued resources are conserved and used sustainably; and c) the ways to monitor the effectiveness of conservation actions

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Legitimacy: the governance group is recognized formally (i.e., legal - de jure) or informally (i.e., traditional - de facto) as having jurisdiction over determining what resource or practices are permissible, defining who can access certain resources or implement certain land use practices, and establishing what sanctions can and will be imposed for infractions of these rules. Legitimacy is both a formal perception: people recognize that under law the governance group has the right to make and enforce decisions; and a social perception: people recognize that the governance group understands and is acting in their interests.

Motivation: the level of willingness of individuals within a group to do their jobs, commit time, struggle with adversity, and advocate for their group's interests in an effort to implement their group's plans and achieve their group's objectives and goals.

Natural resource governance: the concept of who makes decisions (the governance group) about regulating access to, and use of, natural resources; and the process by which a governance group decides and defines what is, and what is not, acceptable behavior in terms of natural resource use in a given area; and how the group ensures that people comply with the policies, rules, and regulations for acceptable behavior.

Natural resource management: the implementation of rules and regulations defined by a governance body or group. Natural resource "governors" are those individuals or groups that establish, and are accountable for, the implementation of natural resource access and use policies and norms (institutions). "Managers" are those individuals or groups that are responsible for executing the policies, rules, and regulations (institutions) established by the "governors."

Organizational process: The operational system that a governance group agrees to put in place and adapt over time to make and implement decisions in pursuit of its objectives (i.e., defines why the group exists, who the group represents, how the group engages its internal membership, and how the group communicates its decisions).

Participation: the extent that different natural resource users and rights holders are able to take part and have their voices heard in establishing policies that restrict access to and use of resources, and in adjudicating sanctions against those that fail to comply with accepted norms.

Power: the ability of a governance group to exert their authority and to do so without being regularly or repeatedly undermined by other more powerful groups.

Resources: the physical (office space, cars, boats, camera traps, GPS, computers, phones, tents, fuel, etc.), financial, and staffing assets needed for a governance group to be able to put its plans into action within their jurisdiction and monitor and report the outcomes and impacts of their efforts.

Rights Holders: unlike many other stakeholders, these people deserve specific attention as they have specific rights related to the ownership and use of resources and lands that other stakeholders do not. Rights holders are often customary landowners, but can also include hunters or fishers who have rights to access particular resources.

Transparency: the openness with which a governance group carries out its work.

Introduction

This guide is designed to offer conservation practitioners with a set of basic concepts and tools for better understanding, assessing, and strengthening the governance of natural resources in landscapes and seascapes. The audience for the guide is field staff of conservation organizations who wish to conduct a governance mapping exercise to measure the strengths and weaknesses assessment in the places where they work.

Users of this guide will be able to:

- Identify key groups who govern access to, and use of, natural resources in a given geographic area;
- Assess the governance strengths and weaknesses of the key groups, providing information that can then help direct investments towards improvements in the governance of natural resources within the landscape or seascape.

The guide is meant to be straightforward, practical, and easy to apply. It should be useful in helping to frame governance issues and identify actions at the onset of a project, and as a tool to enhance implementation in a landscape or seascape where a conservation program is already established.

This guide is not designed to evaluate the achievement of natural resource management (NRM) objectives by a governance group. Rather, the guide is designed to assess whether or not a group has the attributes needed for effective governance of natural resources. Therefore, this guide focuses on a small set of attributes that are strong predictors of the likely “effectiveness” of the different groups to govern access to and regulate the use of natural resources within a given area. Readers should be aware that governance does not exist in a vacuum. Tools such as a political economy assessment are complementary to the NRG-T and can help situate the challenges of natural resource conservation within political and economic forces that may influence governance. A 2019 guide “Participatory Approaches to Natural Resource Management¹” written by the U.S. Forest Service contains useful concepts for conservation teams on improving the participation of local communities - a key concept which should be included as conservation teams use this NRG-T. The NRG-T is not a top-down tool for conservation teams - it should be discussed and conducted together with the governance groups.

¹ The guide is available in [English](#) and [French](#) and can be downloaded on this website : <https://usfscentralafrica.org/resources-publications/>.

Key terms and concepts



What Is Natural Resource Governance and How Is It Measured?

Improving management of natural resources, reducing threats to wildlife, and meeting conservation objectives requires good governance. At an ecologically meaningful scale, governance of natural resources is typically not the responsibility of a single agency or group, but rather is carried out through the actions of more than one group or organization from the public, private, and civil society sectors, with formal or informal authority to govern, and often with overlapping and competing jurisdictions.

Unsustainable resource and land use practices often occur in poorly regulated spaces, where the interests of certain individuals and groups trump the interests of broader society. Conserving biodiversity and ensuring sustainable natural resource use within an area is difficult, therefore, in the absence of effective governance. Long-term sustainable management of natural resources is predicated on governance that is representative and democratic. To enhance governance effectiveness at an ecologically meaningful scale it is necessary to:

- 1 Identify all governance groups in the area;
- 2 Map their jurisdictions;
- 3 Rank governance groups;
- 4 Assess their strengths;
- 5 Invest in overcoming their weaknesses.

How does natural resource governance differ from natural resource management?

Good natural resource governance can be defined as the process by which groups of rights holders define and decide, through a transparent and democratic process that represents the interests of group members, what is and what is not acceptable behavior in terms of natural resource use in a given area, and how the group ensures that members and outsiders (i.e. non-members) comply with their policies, rules, and regulations for acceptable behavior.

Governance differs from management in that the latter is the implementation of rules and regulations defined by a governance body or group.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Natural resource **governors** are those individuals or groups that 1) decide how natural resources within their jurisdiction can be used, and 2) are accountable for the implementation of their natural resource access and use. **Managers** are those individuals or groups that are responsible for executing the policies, rules, and regulations (institutions) established by the **governors**.

What is a governance group?

In this guide governance groups are those that have recognized rights to make decisions and judgements (i.e., jurisdiction) over the use of natural resources within given areas.

Governance groups can be government agencies, civil society or non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, associations, communities, chiefdoms, Indigenous Peoples councils or leadership, or private companies.

Governance groups define what natural resource uses are and are not desirable and permissible. In some, but not all, cases they also carry out management actions to ensure that local residents and outsiders comply with desired natural resource rules and regulations. Their ability to govern effectively lies at the core of biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource use within any area.

It is likely that effective governance of natural resources at an ecologically meaningful scale will require several governance groups with different jurisdictions interacting and reinforcing or influencing each other's decisions.

Institutions versus governance groups

The term institution is often misunderstood. In this guide, institution is used in its legal sense (i.e., the institution of marriage) to mean the norms, rules, regulations, and policies that governance groups define to guide our individual and social behavior and practices.

Simply put, institutions are the laws, rules and regulations, and governance groups are the entities that create the institutions and enforce them.

Three Core Attributes for Effective Governance

What factors determine if a group will be able to effectively govern access to and use of natural resources (i.e., so that resource use is sustainable), is much debated. Many factors can play a role in whether or not a governance group is able to govern effectively, and a review of the literature and governance guidelines would generate a huge list of attributes believed to be necessary for good governance. **A practical and credible governance assessment tool is needed to help identify where investments in strengthening governance should be targeted and to track and report governance strengths and weaknesses over time. This tool needs to focus on the smallest set of attributes that are believed to be the best predictors of effectiveness and that can be assessed reliably and repeatedly over time at relatively low cost.**

Given this, the focus of this guide is on only three vital attributes: **authority, capacity, and power**. If a governance group lacks **authority** to govern (i.e., people do not trust them to represent and protect their interests), it will fail to be effective over the long term. If a governance group has insufficient **capacity** to govern (i.e., decide what to do and implement those decisions), then, even if it is perceived to be legitimate in the eyes of key resource users and rights holders, it is unlikely to be able to govern access to and use of natural resources. Lastly, even when a governance group is perceived as being the legitimate authority, and even when it has the capacity to plan and to act, if it does not have the political, economic, or policing **power** to exert its authority, it will be unable to govern effectively. Our model for effective governance (Figure 1) recognizes that aspects of authority (i.e., legitimacy) and capacity (i.e., financial resources or technical capacity) may influence how much power a group possesses.

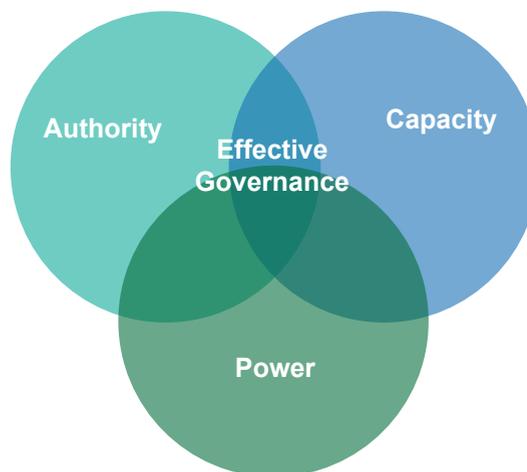


Figure 1: Authority, capacity and power: the three critical elements of effective natural resources governance.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Attribute 1

Authority

Authority is a loaded term that means many things to many people. The term was chosen as a core attribute of effective governance because evidence from years of field experience in a large range of contexts suggests that if a governance group is not perceived by resource users as having the authority to make natural resources decisions and enforce compliance, then their ability to manage natural resources access and use is undermined immediately or over the long term.

Within the context of this guide, authority is defined as:

the perception of natural resource users and rights holders that a governance group genuinely represents their interests and has legal or customary jurisdiction (i.e., official or customary right) to govern “their” natural resources.

Authority, not surprisingly, is a composite attribute that is built on a foundation of core concerns of resource users and rights holders. Exactly what constitutes authority for a given area will depend on a mix of complex factors including social and political histories, and level of exposure to democratic conceptions of governance. Below are examples of components of authority that field experience suggests are really important. The first - legitimacy - is intrinsic to the governance group (i.e., an internal characteristic), whereas the remaining four: accountability, transparency, participation and fairness, are results of the actions of the governance group (i.e., does the group conduct its work accountably, transparently, and fairly, with the meaningful participation of resource users and rights holders). These are not all the factors that might contribute to a governance group's authority, but we argue that they are the most important.

Legitimacy is the recognition of the governance group's right to determine: a) what resources or land use practices are permissible; b) who can access certain resources or implement certain land use practices; and c) what sanctions can and will be imposed for infractions of these rules. This right to govern is either formal (i.e., legal - de jure) or informal (i.e., traditional - de facto).

Examples of a governance group's perceived legitimacy

In many places more than one group may have the legitimate right to manage natural resources in the same place. A national park agency may be perceived by local people to have the legitimate right under the law to decide what is permissible within national protected areas and to impose these rules. Simultaneously, a local community may have legitimate customary rights to determine how their land and resources are used and to enforce these rules through social pressure. For example, in Yasuni National Park, the National Park Service of Ecuador, the Ecuador Ministry of Energy and Mining, and the Waorani indigenous people all have the legitimate, legal or customary right to decide who has access to natural resources within the park.

Accountability is the stakeholder belief or understanding that a governance group (and each individual with a role within the group) is a) required to fulfill certain responsibilities, and b) is seen to fulfill those responsibilities. Most importantly the governance group must be seen to be downwardly accountable for their actions and responsive to the interests and concerns of natural resource users and rights holders. Accountability also relates to whether natural resource users and rights holders have the power to bring the group to account for their decisions and actions - i.e., hold them accountable. This requires that there is a legal or customary framework in place that ensures public access to information about the workings of a governance group, requires that a governance group respond to requests for information, and specifies the mechanism of redress should a group fail to meet its obligations.

Transparency generally refers to the openness with which stakeholders perceive that a governance group carries out its work (i.e., do stakeholders feel they know what the governance groups decisions are and why they made these decisions).

Participation refers to the extent different natural resource users and rights holders are able to take part and have their voices heard in establishing policies that restrict access to and use of resources, and in adjudicating sanctions against those that fail to comply with accepted norms. Whether or not key natural resource users and rights holders perceive that their participation is sought and valued often determines whether or not they feel that the group has the legitimate authority to make decisions for them about access and use of "their" resources.

Fairness refers to whether or not natural resource users and rights holders feel that rules regulating access to and use of natural resources are equitable in terms of who benefits and who incurs the costs, and that the enforcement of these rules is applied equally across all individuals and groups. Broadly speaking, fairness revolves around concerns over equitable distribution of costs and benefits, equal rights under the law, and equal application of the law.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Diversity refers to the explicit inclusion of women and minority groups in the governance decision-making process and their involvement in the adjudication of infractions.

Stakeholders, Rightsholders, and Duty-bearers

(Adapted from “Participatory Approaches to Natural Resource Management Planning: A Practical Guide.” United States Forest Service and the Wildlife Conservation Society. 2019)

It is important to highlight the difference between two distinct categories of people that are often involved in natural resource (NR) governance: stakeholders and rightsholders. Stakeholders in this case are any actors who have a stake in the natural resources in question, who will be affected by and/or who have political responsibility, authority and resources to influence the governance, management and/or use of resources. As a result, stakeholders can include a wide range of organizations and individuals who have greater or lesser degrees of interest and participation in NR governance. A subsection of stakeholders known as “duty bearers” are actors who have a particular obligation or responsibility to respect, promote and realize human rights and to abstain from human rights violations. The term is most commonly used to refer to state actors, but non-state actors, such as conservation and development practitioners, can also be considered duty bearers.

Rightsholders are typically customary owners of land/water systems, although some rightsholders are not owners but people such as hunters or migrant farmers who have rights to access particular resources. Unlike many of the other stakeholders who are involved in NR use, rightsholders deserve specific attention because governance initiatives often take place on their lands/waters or affect their rights to use their lands/waters. Rightsholders are often in a weaker position than stakeholders from public and business sectors, who often are stronger and better-established actors in planning and decision-making processes. As a result, specific attention is often needed to redress imbalances and ensure that rightsholders are at the forefront of the governance and management of any natural resource use.

Attribute 2

Capacity

Governance groups that prove themselves to be effective are always endowed with the skills, abilities, resources, and motivation that allow them to plan and implement conservation and sustainable natural resource plans and actions.

Technical knowledge and skills, as well as human and financial resources, are all important aspects of capacity. An enabling institutional framework (i.e., norms, rules, and regulations that support, rather than undermine, sustainable NRM) is also a critical component of governance capacity. As with legitimacy, there may be important components of capacity that are more locally defined. For example, motivation may be an important component of capacity in many landscapes but this may not be the case everywhere.

Below we have included some examples of what might be critical components of a group's governance capacity:

Knowledge and skills include basic understanding of a) the factors - biological, economic, historical, sociopolitical, and managerial - that could adversely influence the long-term sustainability of natural resource use; b) the policies and practices that would be needed to remedy the situation so that valued natural resources are conserved and used sustainably; and c) ways a group might monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of their conservation plans.

Resources are the physical (office space, cars, boats, camera traps, GPS, computers, phones, tents, fuel, etc.), financial (funds to cover capital and recurring operational costs), and staffing assets needed for a governance group to be able to put its plans into action at the appropriate spatial scale and monitor and report the outcomes and impacts of their efforts.

Institutional framework is the set of norms, rules, regulations, and policies that either enable or hinder a governance group's ability to sustainably manage natural resources. A governance body may have the skills, resources, and motivation to take action. However, their actions are unlikely to be effective in the long term if their actions are not founded on a supportive set of rules and regulations that are based on formal or customary law, about who has access to what resources and how these resources may be used.

Motivation refers to the level of willingness of individuals within a governance group to do their jobs, commit time, struggle with adversity, and advocate for their group's interests in an effort to implement their group's plans and achieve their group's objectives and goals. Motivation is that essence that encourages work for reasons beyond remuneration. Motivation is an abiding personal commitment to doing all that is necessary to get the job done.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Attribute 3

Power

Power manifests in various ways, and depends in part whether others, outside of the group, have the ability to countermand the group's decisions. Power is the one governance attribute that is not solely defined by the qualities of a single governance group; it is an attribute that measures the governance group against other groups, agencies, actors, and organizations. Understanding the power of a particular governance group is necessary, but for this attribute, there also needs to be an understanding of how power is held and used by other groups and individuals. In one National Park in Peru, though the Ministry of Environment and the National Parks Agency have jurisdiction over governance of the park, it is the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum and a private sector oil company that actually determine who has access to the national park. So, in this case, even though the National Parks Agency has formal governance authority of the national park, a private sector company has the de facto authority over access to the park and repeatedly countermands the Park Service's ability to do their job.

To govern successfully, a group must have the power to exercise its legitimate authority and make effective use of its human and financial resources. A group is likely to have the power to govern if it is able, for example, to:

- Convene a meeting with senior government officials and other stakeholders;
- Alter or halt plans or actions by government or private sector actors that would affect the community's territorial resources;
- Ensure that individuals detained by the community for breaking community laws within community territory are arrested and prosecuted promptly by the national judicial system;
- Implement and enforce its territorial management plans without interference;
- Prevent individuals who are not from the community from using natural resources within community territory;
- Purge governance group members for poor performance or misconduct.



Figure 2: Governance attributes and their sub-attributes as defined by the NRGT



The Natural Resource Governance Tool Manual

Following is a brief description and a more detailed guide to the six key steps for assessing natural resource governance. The purpose of this exercise is to: a) help identify where targeted investments might help strengthen the ability of different groups with formal or informal jurisdiction to govern the use of natural resources sustainably, and b) assess over time whether these investments are having the desired impact and are demonstrably strengthening sustainable natural resource governance abilities of targeted groups.

The tool asks less about whether a governance group is making good decisions and enforcing them, or has evidence that natural resources within their jurisdiction are being used sustainably. Instead it focuses more on whether they have the required authority, capacity and power to sustainably govern natural resources, and if not, why not. The NRGTool not only focuses on natural resource governance in itself, but also on the organizational process of the groups evaluated, which is more about the internal organization of a governance group and how it functions. It is a function of natural resources governance, as communities need to organize themselves to become capable of making the right decisions. Working with the group evaluated to improve their internal organizational capacity is essential to allow them to better govern natural resources.

Summary

Step 1 - Identify and map key governance groups within a landscape or seascape

Identify and map groups that have an influence over natural resources governance in the given landscape or seascape. Information may be gathered using existing documents, input from experienced staff and key informants, or using a wider participatory process. Once the main natural resource governance groups have been identified, their specific territorial (e.g., international, regional, national, or local) and natural resource (e.g., land, water, wildlife, minerals, etc.) influence should be noted. Simply said, as each governance group is discussed, one should attempt to map their geographic influence and to list the range of natural resources over which they have formal or customary jurisdiction (i.e., decision making authority and responsibility). Other key actors which may have a key influence over these groups or resources can also be mapped to better understand the political landscape.

Step 2 - Rank and select the most influential governance groups

If a large number of governance groups (>5) were identified in Step 1, it is most efficient to conduct the governance assessment discussion (Step 3) starting with those groups that have the greatest influence over the most extensive geographic area within the landscape, or over the widest range of natural resources

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within the landscape. Influence can be thought of as a mixture of spatial coverage, the range of resources governed, and whether the absence of a particular governance group would seriously undermine conservation effectiveness within the landscape or seascape. A simple way to rank the list is to ask each expert to vote for their top three most influential natural resource governance groups with jurisdiction over the use of natural resources within the landscape or seascape. Once the groups are ranked, the team can choose which ones they want to work with to improve their governance. If using the NRGT for the first time, it is best to start with the 3-4 most influential governance groups. More groups can participate in the NRGT if the team has the resources to do so.

Step 3 - Create a data entry form

Interviews can be undertaken most efficiently using the KoBoToolbox template questionnaire, which can be [downloaded for free](#)¹, and uploaded on a tablet or smartphone for the field team. An account can be created for free on <https://kf.kobotoolbox.org/> to house the form and data. Some questions in the template can be adapted to the needs of the team: choices for landscapes, surveyors, governance group and location of interview. Once the form is modified, it can be imported into KoBoToolbox and used to collect data and linked to an online database.

Step 4 - Conduct governance interviews

For the selected governance groups to be assessed, both members of the governance group and people whose lives are influenced by the group's decisions will need to be interviewed. The number of people interviewed should be representative of the number of group members and people influenced by the group, with a minimum of four of each. To obtain a range of opinions it is important to select, whenever possible, equal numbers of men and women, and in the case of the governance group people from different positions of responsibility. If the group's influence covers a large area, do not interview people who live in the same village, but try to interview people from different places within the group's jurisdiction. This will likely mean that you will need to interview more than four people in this category.

Step 5 - Analyze and present results

The average governance attributes and sub-attributes per group and per year can be calculated easily on Excel using raw data downloaded from KoBoToolbox. An online database built by WCS and WRI can also be used to run automated analyses. Reporting authority, capacity, and power scores using spider or radar diagrams helps to visualize the results and facilitates interpretation and the drawing of conclusions on future strategies or interventions. The team should

write a report that includes a narrative analysis of the answers and recommendations, evaluating opportunities for strengthening the ability of specific groups to govern natural resources within the landscape or seascape.

Step 6 - Develop and implement a governance action plan

Having completed Steps 1-5 the team will now have a good understanding of the governance strengths and weaknesses of key governance groups within their geographic area of interest. With this new knowledge the team is ready to design and implement activities to address weakness and strengthen each group's ability to govern more effectively. One approach to completing Step 6, the governance action plan, is to update the conceptual model for the project and to develop results chains that explicitly show how chosen actions will strengthen the key attributes of a governance group that were assessed to be relatively weak. The activities planned to improve governance can be put in a governance action plan, that should include a budget, to be delivered in the coming implementation period. This action plan should be closely followed and monitored to ensure that actions are actually being taken to improve local governance. Steps 1 to 6 should be done in Year 1 of a project, so that Year 2 can be dedicated to implementing the governance action plan. Then, Steps 4 to 6 can be done again in Year 3 to assess if the investments to improve governance of natural resources had the impact expected, and draw a new action plan based on the new results. This cycle can be repeated until all the governance scores of the groups evaluated are at their maximum.



When to use the NRGT

The NRGT can be conducted both near the start of a project or at any time during the implementation of a project. The evaluation should be repeated every 2 or 3 years to measure the changes in governance attributes as a result of conservation efforts. If a group is newly created, the team should wait at least six months or up to a year before doing the first NRGT, to give the group time to set up before evaluating it.

Step-by-Step Instructions to deploy the NRGTool

Step 1

Identify and map key governance groups within a landscape or seascape

To better assess and understand NR governance and its relationship to improving conservation in landscapes and seascapes, it is necessary to begin by identifying the key groups that play a role in deciding how natural resources are managed within the physical area. To start, identify someone in your group who can facilitate this process. Key qualities in a facilitator include the ability to listen, to actively seek the participation of everyone invited, and to ensure that he/she remains neutral except. We suggest you explore the many resources available on the internet to help facilitating good discussions.

Participants: Project members and representatives of local organizations, or key actors that might best be able to contribute. Brief instructions should be sent out beforehand to ensure that participants are able to come to the focus group properly prepared.

Suggested duration: 1–2 hours.

Facilitator checklist and advice:

- > *Begin by using or drawing a map that depicts the full territory of the landscape or seascape.*
- > *Briefly discuss the principal types of natural resources within the territory.*
- > *Briefly discuss the main conservation threats in the landscape or seascape.*
- > *Identify, via a brainstorming session, the natural resource governance groups in the landscape or seascape, thinking first of those groups that are actually present physically within the territory; map their jurisdictions (i.e., the spatial extent and geographic configuration of the land or water over which they have jurisdiction to establish and enforce natural resource access and use institutions).*
- > *Consider the following questions:*
 - *What groups are actually governing natural resources at this moment?*
 - *Who are they governing?*
 - *Which state or government agencies are most visible and engaged?*
 - *Have we considered different kinds of organizations such as: local government, local communities, indigenous organizations, producer groups, private sector companies?*
- > *During the process it will be helpful to distinguish between community, local, regional, national, and international groups that actually conduct activities or have influence within the landscape or seascape.*
- > *Different colored markers can be used to differentiate between local and other actors and to identify overlapping jurisdictions.*
- > *Ensure that no key governance groups have been left out.*

The facilitator needs to explain to the team that governance groups may have jurisdiction over different spaces and natural resources within a landscape or seascape, and that these groups can be government agencies, civil society or non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, associations, communities, or private companies. These groups often both define what natural resource uses are and are not desirable and permissible, and carry out management actions to ensure that local residents and outsiders comply with natural resource rules and regulations. Their ability to govern effectively lies at the core of biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource use within any landscape or seascape.

Know your governance group?

Sometimes you may already know which governance group you want to work with. Perhaps it is a community forestry group, a fishing cooperative, or a rangeland management authority. If this is the case, it is still useful to map out and rank other stakeholder groups (Steps 1 & 2) as they may have a negative influence on the power attribute of the group you're focusing on.

Step 2 Rank and select the most influential governance groups

If a large number of governance groups (>5) were identified in Step 1, rank the groups according to their influence over natural resources access and use within the landscape. Influence can be thought of as a mixture of spatial coverage, the range of resources governed, and whether the absence of a particular governance group would seriously undermine conservation effectiveness within the landscape or seascape.

Once the governance groups identified are ranked by influence, select the one who will participate in the assessment. The most efficient might be to choose groups that have the greatest influence over the most extensive geography within the landscape, or over the widest range of natural resources within the landscape. However, it is possible to work with others if there is a specific interest for particular groups like hunting or fishing associations for example. If working with small or less influential groups, it is important to understand that their work may be undermined by more powerful groups. If using the NRGTool for the first time it is best to start working with 3 or 4 groups per landscape. More groups can be selected to participate if the project has the resources to do so. For each of these groups, it is important to encourage their participation and willingness to strengthen their governance capacity by better understanding where they might need assistance. The groups who will participate should be interested in learning more about their strengths and weaknesses - if they are not willing to share information and improve, the NRGTool will not be useful.

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not willing to share information and improve, the NRGTool will not be useful.

Participants: If possible, the same group that carried out Step 1.

Suggested duration: 0.5 hour.

Facilitator checklist and advice:

- > *Facilitator should review the groups identified and mapped in the previous exercise and then move to a discussion of the criteria to help select the most influential groups.*
- > *An easy way to identify the most influential groups is to give each team member three votes and ask them to cast one vote for each of their top three candidates.*

After discussing what criteria might best characterize those governance groups that have the most and least influence over natural resource access and use within the landscape or seascape, the simplest way to rank-order the groups is to vote.

Non-governance groups

In the communities with whom you work, there are often cooperatives, associations, committees that exist. If these groups do not govern natural resource use, then do not use the NRGTool. Other tools exist that can help evaluate and improve the management of those groups or organisations.

Step 3 Create a data entry form

Why use an electronic form

In the first NRGTool manual (2015), the questionnaire was paper-based. After completing the baseline surveys, we realized collecting data with paper and then enter the information into a relational database like Access was a significant amount of work that could be avoided by using modern technology. With electronic forms, dropdown lists and validation criteria minimize mistakes and avoid additional data entry. The questionnaire has been improved, collecting NRGTool survey data on a hand-held device is easy, and the information is automatically uploaded to a secure database on the internet.

Although using tablets might seem difficult for people who are used to paper,

teams piloting the new technique have showed that people can learn quickly and easily become familiar with the new tool and methodology. The speed at which data can be entered and sent to an online database is a welcome improvement, along with the fact that data can easily be checked and entry errors corrected - data can also be analyzed as soon as the teams return from the field. Using electronic forms and cloud-based storage also dramatically reduces the risk that data are lost and helps maintain the confidentiality of participants' information.

Lesson Learned: Using tablets in the field

Using tablets in the field requires some care. For the NRG, it is better to choose tablets of at least 6", with a good battery life. Buying an extra power bank will ensure the surveyors can work properly even in remote villages without regular electricity. Remember to switch off the Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and any energy-consuming app when collecting data in the field. A waterproof and/or shockproof case prolongs the life of your equipment. For surveyors using tablets for the first time, it is necessary to plan a specific training before going to the field on how to collect data digitally, providing some basic rules on how to take care of the tablet or smartphone. Doing a pilot data collection and correcting errors before starting the real data collection will avoid losing data from badly filled forms.

KoBoToolbox

KoBoToolbox is a free electronic data collection system based on Google's Open Data Kit. It was developed by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and Brigham and Women's Hospital to make Open Data Kit (ODK) more user-friendly. KoBoToolbox can be used for any quantitative or qualitative survey, and reduces both data entry errors and data entry time. The data form can be filled in offline, and the data that is temporarily stored on the hand-held device will be uploaded to the cloud database when the device is reconnected to a mobile or Wi-Fi network. To start using KoBoToolbox, create an account - if you do not already have one - on this website: <https://kf.kobotoolbox.org/>.

In the following sections, we will describe how to create the NRG form, collect and analyze your data. If you want more information about using KoBoToolbox, visit their website (<http://www.kobotoolbox.org/>) and their help center (<http://support.kobotoolbox.org/>). We recommend that you first read the articles on the Form Builder¹ and the Multiple Languages² on the help center.

The NRG form is available in the public collection named WCS Socio-Economics of the KoBoToolbox library. You can also download the templates for these forms here:

1 <http://help.kobotoolbox.org/creating-forms/formbuilder/overview-of-all-formbuilder-functions>

2 <http://help.kobotoolbox.org/creating-forms/adding-another-language-to-your-form>

NRGT template form for KoBoToolbox¹

Important notes for surveys in other language than English

By default, all the elements in the column **name** of the **survey** page, as well as **list_name** and name of the choices page must remain in English. This allows the online database to automatically analyze the data.

NRGT Form

In your KoBoToolbox account², click on the blue button “New” at the top left of the screen and select “Upload an XLSForm”.

Drag and drop the XLSForm called “NRGT_Form” or click in the window to browse the form. When the form is uploaded, you can change the title of your project as you wish, but it is best to keep “NRGT” to find it easily, as well as the year of data collection. Description, sector and country are optional. Click on “Create project” and then on the pencil button to edit the form in the form builder.

You should not remove any of the metadata already selected. The “**today**”, “**start**” and “**end**” are key components of the form to know when the surveys were done, and allow to check the time spent per survey to control the effort of your surveyors. When the survey time is too short (less than 10 minutes), it might mean that the survey is fake. When the survey time is too long (over 45 minutes), the surveyor may need to better understand the form and how to use it. You can add other metadata if wanted, then close the “Layout and Settings” panel.

The welcome message is an example that you can edit to adapt to your context. See Consent box in Step 4 for more details about this welcome message and how to ask consent to participate in the survey.

You can edit/delete/add **options** in the following questions:

- Select landscape;
- Name of the surveyor;
- Governance group name;
- Location of the interview.

When editing the options, option **values** need to be updated too in the grey box on the right. Make sure to use only lowercase, no space, and no special character.

¹ <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1WIH8ZJ8aYOgh2ugSMo3cluZkSARZe4xl>

² This section should be read with KoBoToolbox open.

For example, if the name of one interviewer is Tony Kajembe, then the value could be tony_kajembe, or tkajembe, or just kajembe.

For all the other questions, do not change any **Data Column Name** as the form must comply with the naming convention of the online database so that data can be retrieved, stored, and analyzed properly.

When all the questions are finalized, save and deploy the form. You can learn more about deploying forms on the KoBoToolbox Help Center¹.

Once it is deployed, you can start using it. We strongly suggest that you pilot it before starting the actual data collection. The URL (starting with <https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/#XxxXxxx>) is the unique address of the form, and can be copied and pasted into the tablet or smartphone to open the form and collect data. An example of NRG form is available in Appendix 1.

Step 4

Conduct governance interviews

For each governance group to be assessed, members of the governance group and people whose lives are influenced by the group's decisions should be interviewed. The number of people interviewed should be representative of the number of group members and people influenced by the group. To obtain a range of opinions it is important to select, whenever possible, equal numbers of men and women, and in the case of the governance group, people from different positions of responsibility. If the group's influence covers a large area, do not interview people who live in the same village, but interview people from different places within the group's jurisdiction. This will likely mean that you will need to interview more than 4 people in this category.

¹ <http://help.kobotoolbox.org/creating-forms/general/deploying-a-form-as-a-new-data-collection-project>

Lesson Learned : Importance of obtaining consent before NRGT interviews

Working with communities requires their voluntary consent, whether it be for research activities or village programs. An IRB, Institutional Review Board, is a mechanism to ensure the protection of interviewees from any potential harm caused by research (e.g. household's gps coordinates or a hunter's name linked to illegal activities). This social safeguards tool also applies to the NRGT. It is necessary to obtain consent before starting any interview. The principles to obtain consent are similar to the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process used for projects related to land tenure or resources.

- There should be no manipulation of the the person being interviewed (**free**);
- Consent should be solicited before beginning the survey (**prior**);
- The interviewee should receive the relevant information (in local language) about the NRGT interview (**informed**). This should include the purpose of the NRGT, study procedure, risks and benefits from participating, confidentiality, contact information and mention that the participation is voluntary.

If a person refuses to participate, you should never insist. As participating in the NRGT survey does not provide any direct monetary or in-kind benefits, obtaining their consent should prevent participants from dropping out in the middle of the interview, and avoid receiving complaints from communities after the study. The detailed informed consent procedure is available in Appendix 2.

All the surveyors who are going to do the NRGT should receive the training on ethical principles for research with human subjects: [Human Subjects Research](#)

Participants: If possible, interviewers should be the same people that carried out Step 1. Members of the governance groups and people influenced by the decisions of the groups should be interviewed.

Suggested duration: 0.5 hour per interview

Facilitator checklist and advice:

- > *Load the KoBoToolbox NRGT form on the tablet, using the template provided in the Public Collection "WCS Socio-Economic" of KoBoToolbox Library (screenshot in Appendix 1).*
- > *Develop the sampling framework of surveys for each group to be evaluated.*
- > *Organize the field mission to conduct the surveys.*
- > *Translate the questionnaire to the local language and ensure all interviewers present the questions in the same way. Ensure the team understands each governance attribute and that s/he can explain the concept in local language.*
- > *The interviewer should speak in local language to make it easier for local people to understand the questions and the concepts of governance.*

- > *The interviewer and the interviewee should complete the questionnaire in private, no one else should be listening to the questions and answers.*
- > *If possible it is better that a woman do the interviews with women.*
- > *Questionnaire surveys work best when: 1) the interviewee understands clearly why the assessment is being undertaken and what their answers will be used for; 2) the interviewee knows and trusts the interviewer and; 3) the interviewee feels confident that their answers will remain private.*
- > *The consent procedure in the introduction is the most important part of a survey. Some questions can be delicate to ask, so it is very important that people feel comfortable enough to be completely honest with the interviewer. To achieve that, a good introduction is needed, explaining the purpose of the survey, and how this will help them to improve natural resource governance. Each participant should be ensured that neither names nor answers would be revealed in public. They must understand that the information they are giving will not be used to do harm. Teams can follow the consent procedure that is given in Appendix 2.*

The facilitator should start Step 4 by introducing the objectives of the NRG T to local authorities and partners (See NRG T factsheet as an example, in Appendix 3), and allowing team members to ask questions.

Step 5

Analyze and present results

The World Resources Institute (WRI) and WCS built an online database that can organize, store and analyze the NRG T data. To be able to use this online database, contact Jonathan Palmer (jpalmer@wcs.org) or Diane Detoeuf (dde-toeuf@wcs.org).

Before being analyzed, all data need to be checked for any errors and to be corrected. Connect to your Kobo account, select the NRG T form and click on the “Data” tab on top of the screen. Select “Table” view on the left, and from there you can see all your data. Use the filters to check for mistakes. When you find an error, open the survey data by clicking on “Open” at the beginning of the line of data then “Edit”. The form will open in Enketo¹, and from there you can correct the fields as needed. Once everything is correct, go to the bottom of the form and click on “Submit”. You should see a window with the mention “successfully submitted”, and you can close it. You can learn more about editing data in KoBoToolbox on their help center². The results can be analyzed directly on Excel using the average function. To do that, first download the table of data in XLS format from the “Data” tab in KoBoToolbox³.

1 Web Forms, also known as Enketo, are used by KoBoToolbox to enter data directly on a computer or on any mobile devices, even offline.

2 <https://support.kobotoolbox.org/managing-your-project-s-data/how-to-edit-or-delete-a-single-submission>

3 See <http://support.kobotoolbox.org/en/articles/592442-exporting-and-downloading-your-data>

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The calculation of the attributes and sub-attributes is a simple average per year per governance group, that can easily be done in Excel using raw data downloaded from your KoBoToolbox account. The details on how the scores are calculated are explained in Appendix 4.

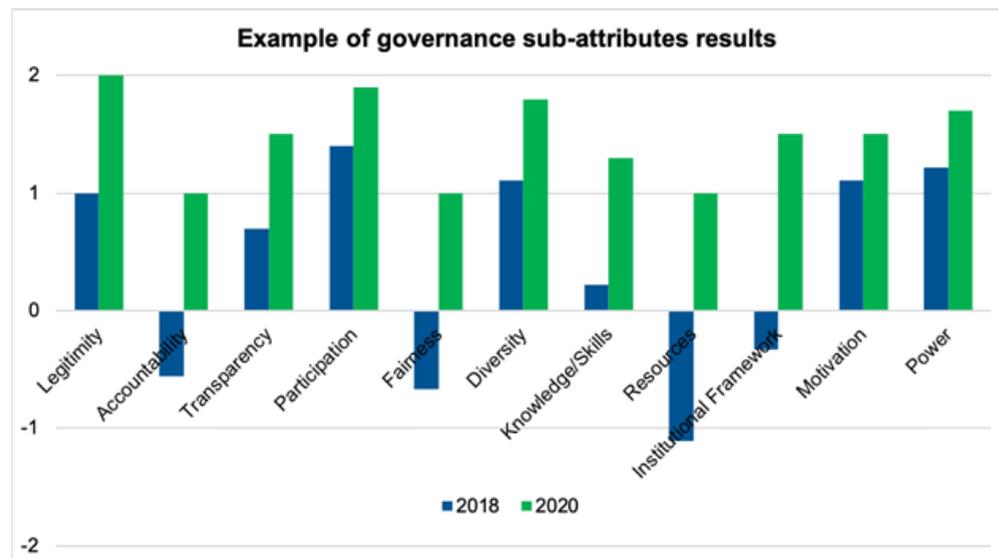
It is essential to share your results with the governance groups you evaluated, as they should be the first people to learn about their strengths and weaknesses, focusing on what they are trying to achieve, what is working well and why, and what needs to be adapted or changed in the future. This discussion is an opportunity to talk with the group's members about how they could improve their governance in a positive way. Using your identified facilitator, components of your discussion could incorporate:

- 1 Present results to group by structuring your meeting around levels rather than numbers for each sub-attributes, considering that:
 - a Scores from -2 to -1 constitute the level "Just started"
 - b Scores from -1 to 0 : "In development"
 - c Scores from 0 to 1 : "Almost there"
 - d Scores from 1 to 2 : "Perfect"

You can use colored cards (e.g., orange for start, yellow for in development, green for confirmed and blue for autonomous) to present their results to the groups who participated to the NRGD.
- 2 Go through the results of each sub-attribute, asking the following:
 - a Do they agree with the results and why?
 - b What attributes they want to improve before the next evaluation? To what level?
 - c Do they have recommendations and ideas of activities to improve those attributes? The facilitator should help them thinking about an action plan. For this, the table of the indicators should be useful (Appendix 5) to help them think about how to go to the next level.
 - d Are the ideas feasible activities to do (cost, logistics, skills)? Who in the group would do it? How long would it take?
- 3 Together, rank the importance or priority of each action proposed based on the following:
 - a Feasibility
 - b Is it important to do this activity this year?
- 4 Based on this, create a simple action plan (or workplan). Use one of their existing workplans as a template. If they don't have one, show them some of your workplans and see which template will be easiest for them to implement and track.

With the right words and the right facilitating method, it is useful to develop a frank approach with the groups in order to share with them the path they have taken and the path that still remains to be taken. This is important to help the group understand that if they fail to properly govern natural resources, it is for objective reasons that can be explained and that indicate to everyone the work that remains to be done.

Reporting authority, capacity, and power scores using diagrams helps to visualize and interpret the results and draw conclusions concerning needed strategies or interventions. The team will have to write a report that includes a narrative analysis of the answers and recommendations that have been decided in a participative way with the group concerned, evaluating opportunities for strengthening the ability of specific groups to govern natural resources.



Example of NRG T results presented in a bar chart

Participants: If possible, the same group that carried out Step 1

Suggested duration: 1 week to write the report

Facilitator checklist and advice:

- > After the surveys, connect the tablets to the internet to load the results on your KoBoToolbox server.
- > Ensure the results are correct by reviewing and cleaning up the data.
- > Download the data and calculate the attributes and sub-attributes averages per group per year.
- > Write the report including the context, method, graphs to visualize the scores, narrative analyses and recommendations.

Narrative analyses and recommendations

To do the narrative analyses, the team should have the results of the scores in front of them for the people who govern and those that are being governed, plus the answers to the last two questions of the form. For each sub-attribute, we want to know why we see what we see, think about the reasons why the governance group has those scores, and provide an explanation about why a score is high or low. The recommendations provided by participants during the interviews will help the team design final recommendations to improve the governance of the group.

Example narrative analyses and recommendations designed with the governance group, presented in a sub-attribute analysis matrix.

Attribute	Sub-Attribute	Narrative Analyses (why do we see what we see)	Co-designed recommendations	Priority
Authority	Legitimacy	Group not officially recognized by the state	Help the group register	1
Capacity	Resources	Membership fees are not sufficient to cover operating costs	Provide a 2-day training to group leaders on proposal writing that leads to the development of two proposals for funding	2
Authority	Participation	It is always the same people who are invited to meetings and speak out.	Conduct a 2-day training on facilitation and diversity that includes role-play to build the board's capacity	3
Power	Power	Local government doesn't abide by forestry laws nor respect community authority over land	Conduct 2-day workshop with local gov't, community leaders, law enforcement, and governance group that includes training on forestry laws and a dialogue to address permitting system	2
etc...				

Step 6 Develop and implement a governance action plan

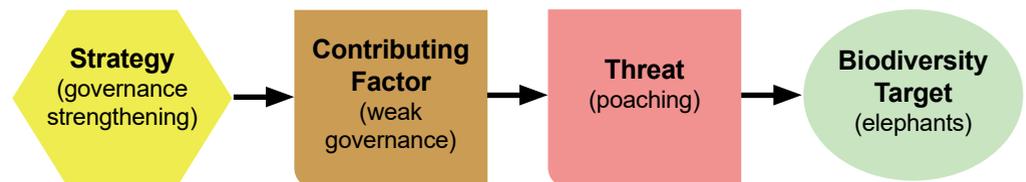
Once the team has completed its analyses and has a good understanding of the critical NR governance weaknesses of the evaluated groups, the activities designed with the group to address these weaknesses can be designed and carried out. One approach to completing Step 6 is to update the conceptual model for the landscape or protected area you are working in (See Box "Updating conceptual models and results chains") and to develop results chains that explicitly show how chosen actions will strengthen attribute of a

governance group that were assessed to be relatively weak when applying the NRG. The action plan (and accompanying budget) to improve governance can be put in a governance action plan that will be implemented the following year. It should be closely followed and monitored to ensure that actions are actually being taken to improve local governance. An example of an action plan is presented in Appendix 6.

Updating conceptual models and results chains

Conceptual models show how we believe the world works, particularly in relation to the conservation of our landscapes. A good conceptual model shows the relationships between stresses on biodiversity (habitat loss and degradation, reduced population size, etc.) and the direct threats which contribute to those stresses (poaching, illegal logging, slash and burn agriculture, etc.). A conceptual model is further developed as it outlines the contributing factors to those direct threats. These are the ultimate factors which lead to the direct threats, sometimes through several levels of factors.

It is important to update your conceptual models based on what you have learned from the governance assessment. How do the weaknesses you identified contribute to the direct threats? It is important to make these relationships explicit in your model so that you can confirm them or revise them as you learn from and adapt the implementation of the program. In the conceptual model below we have inserted the governance-oriented contributing factors (rectangles) and potential actions/strategies (hexagons) on the left side of the model. Note how we have identified these as direct factors contributing to poaching and clearing land for agriculture.

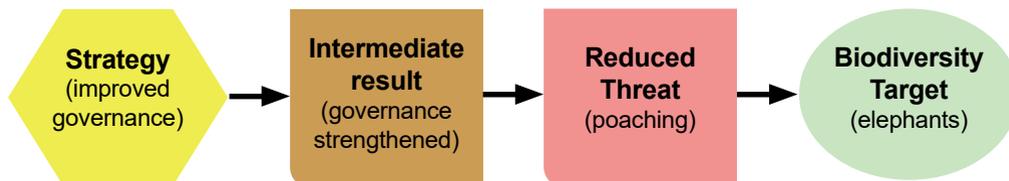


Basic conceptual model of a conservation threat to a biodiversity target

Once you have a good hypothesis (conceptual model) for how you think weak governance is related to the direct threats, the socio-economic team alongside with the governance group being evaluated will need to design actions to improve governance. These actions will form the start of a results chain that shows how your actions will lead to positive changes in the contributing factors and a subsequent reduction in direct threats on the landscape.

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For instance, taking the example of the conceptual model above, our activities could concentrate on four areas: improving ranger pay, equipping rangers appropriately, helping women to learn how to be more assertive in meetings, and mandating public hearings. The results chains for these activities would look like this:



Incorporating strategies and activities to address a conservation threat

This results chain will allow us to locate where the interventions need to be applied and ultimately see if our efforts are having any impact on the level of direct threat. Testing and reviewing our conceptual models and results chains is a basic process of adaptive management which should allow us to learn from our actions.

Planning, implementing, and learning from our actions

Once the actions to carry out have been identified, they can be included in the planning process and start being implemented. The governance assessment will need to be conducted again after a time to see if the activities are improving governance (and conservation) as expected. If not then models, result chains and activities should be reassessed to be more realistic.

Conclusion

CONCLUSION

The Natural Resources Governance Tool was developed and tested to help practitioners better understand how to strengthen governance groups' ability to regulate access to, and use of, natural resources within their jurisdiction so that they can better conserve these resources and the human welfare benefits that are derived from them over the long-term.

This guide should be useful to any government, NGO, or civil society group interested in the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources. It should help improve their ability to invest their time and money effectively, whether they are contemplating working in a new area with new groups of resource owners and users, or have been working in a landscape or seascape for a long time.

In piloting parts of this guide in the USA, Kazakhstan, Bolivia, Kenya, Central Africa and Madagascar some key lessons have been noted and to the extent possible adopted into the process. These include:

- To be truly useful anywhere the guide requires flexibility in its use. The ability of local groups to participate in the process depends greatly on their perceptions of what good governance is, and your ability (as the NRGD implementer) to listen and respond based on those perceptions. Discussing the importance of participation with people that have no real experience with (or concept of) "western" democratic participation is not as useful as asking them to describe and assess actual governance scenarios from their perspective. Once you understand their perspectives you can design interventions to improve not only their governance capacities but also their governance expectations.
- The guide should be viewed as an opportunity to build capacity within a governance group to better understand and assess natural resource governance. Since, as mentioned above, most conservation challenges are resolved by improving natural resource governance and management, this assessment gives us an opportunity to give conservation professionals "hands on" experience in learning and thinking about how resources are governed in the landscape.
- When listing and assessing different governance groups in a landscape it is important to identify all groups that might affect decisions on natural resources even if they are not officially involved in NR governance. This is particularly important when looking at power and which institutions in a landscape might have unofficial "veto" power over natural resources related decisions.

- The NRGTool can be used at multiple scales. Once a landscape level assessment has been completed it might be useful to take the tool to more local levels and allow local actors in local organizations to use it to assess and improve local governance. For example, after a pilot in Kenya, the tool was taken and used to assess the governance of Massai Conservancies in the Amboseli area. The local groups were able to make concrete improvements in governance processes based on the assessment.

We believe this approach would be useful for helping to strengthen governance in any situation where groups of people need to make collective decisions about how to establish and enforce rules that help them to live together and achieve common goals. We hope after reading this guide that you will be encouraged to use this tool in your work and to share your experiences with others.

Appendices

1 NRG T Questionnaire 2019

Select lanspace

- LTLT TNS ITURI
 MTKB MAMABAY MENABE

Name of the surveyor

- Surveyor 1 Surveyor 2 Surveyor 3
 Surveyor 4 Surveyor 5 Surveyor 6
 Surveyor 7 Surveyor 8 Surveyor 9
 Surveyor 10

You are being asked to take part in a study. Before you decide to participate, it is important that you understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. Please listen to the following information carefully. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to improve the governance of the group by first identifying its strengths and weaknesses.

You were randomly selected amongst (members of the governance group OR community influenced by them).

I'll give you a list of statements and you'll tell me if you agree or disagree, the survey will take 20 minutes. We will arrange with collection and analyses have been completed.

You may decline to answer any or all question and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

Your responses are anonymous and will not be shared with anybody else from your family, community, or officials. Results of your survey will be used for reports and publications.

If you have question at any time about this study please call or send a message to the coordinator of the project and we will come and talk with you.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to give you oral consent.

After you give you consent, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship with WCS, your data will be destroyed.

OK

Governance group name

- Group 1 Group 2 Group 3
 Group 4 Group 5

Gender of the person interviewed

- man woman

APPENDICES

Location of the interview

- village 1 village 2 village 3
 village 4 village 5

Is he/ she member of the governance group?

- yes no

if yes, position in the group?

- President Vice President Secretary
 Vice Secretary Treasurer Vice Treasurer
 Other member

Does the person supervise others?

- yes no

What does the group do? what is its job?

The governance group has the formal, or traditional, or customary, legal right to make decisions that affect my access to and use of natural resources.



I am prepared to allow the governance group to represent my interests and make decisions on my behalf regarding access to and use of natural resources.



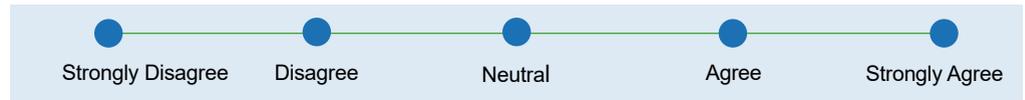
If the governance group makes a decision or acts in a way that I disagree with, I can tell them that I disagree with their decision or action.



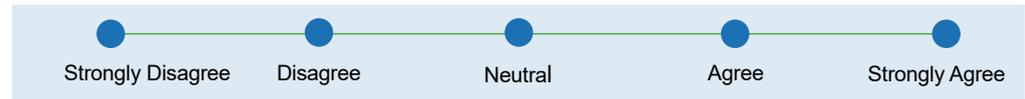
When I disagree with the governance group, they take this seriously and think about whether or not they should change their decisions or actions.



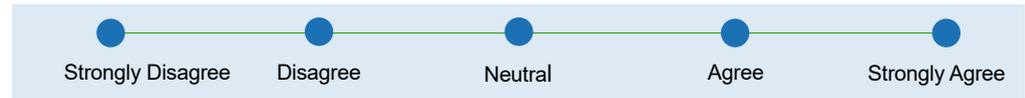
If the governance group acknowledges that it has made a wrong decision, it takes action to prevent a recurrence.



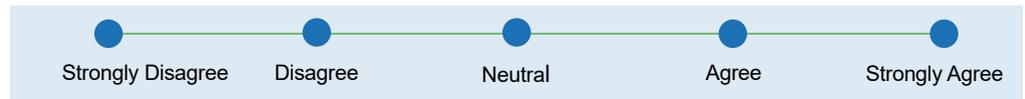
All decisions of the governance group that may influence my access to and use of natural resources are made public.



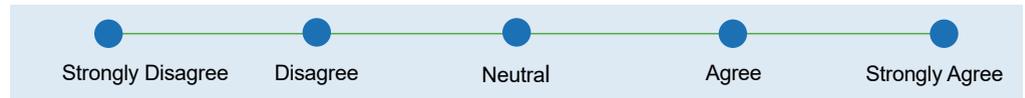
I am informed of all decision of the governance group that may influence my access to and use of natural resources.



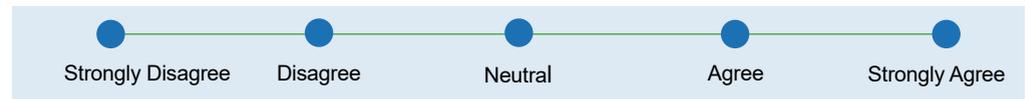
The governance group keeps a record of all decisions it makes that may affect my access to and use of natural.



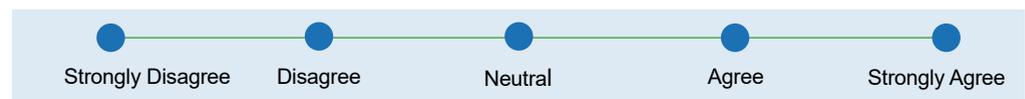
I am invited to attend the general meetings of the governance group.



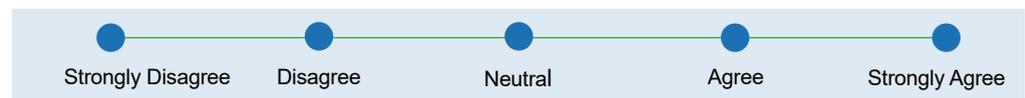
I am free to express my ideas and concerns during the meetings of the governance group.



The governance group is asking me for my opinion on how to manage access to and use of our natural resources.



My opinions and those of all community members are taken into account in the decisions made by the governance group to manage access to and use of our natural resources.

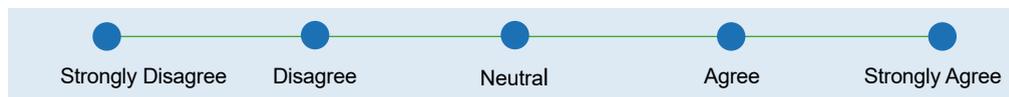


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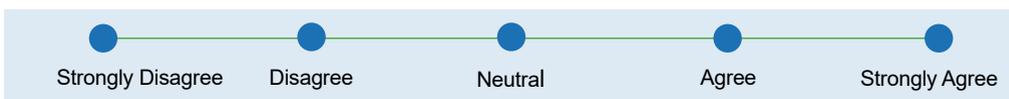
The governance group is willing to allow any legitimate user of natural resources to join the group's decision-making body if he or she so wishes.



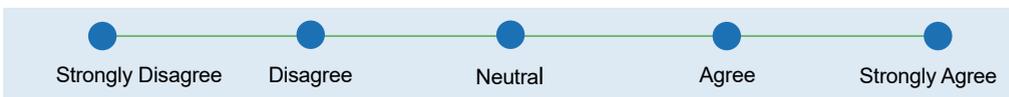
I find that the decisions made by the governance group regarding access to natural resources on our territory are fair because they equally benefit all the rights holders.



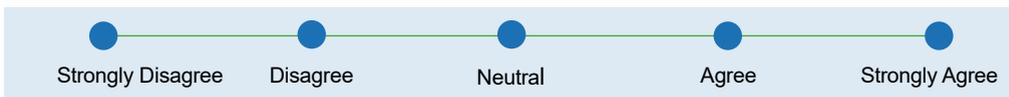
When the governance group enforces our natural resource laws, I find that they punish everyone who is caught breaking the laws, not just some people.



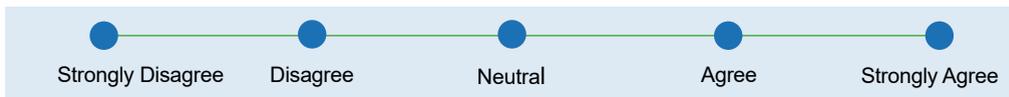
The decisions of the governance group are influenced by the community not just a few people.



The decisions of the governance group are influenced by us and not people who are not part of the community.



Women are well represented in the group and their ideas are listened to and respected.

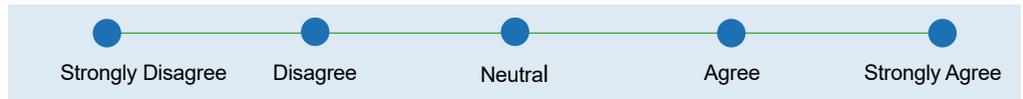


Indigenous people are well represented in the group and their ideas are listened to and respected.



APPENDICES

Members of the governance group are qualified to manage our natural resources (i.e.,the have the necessary skills and knowledge).



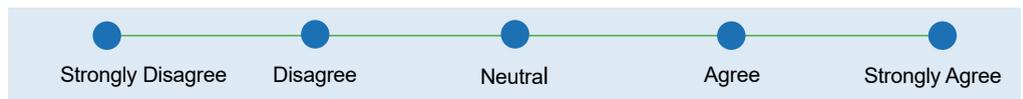
Members of the governance group kwon how to enforce the rules that govern access to and use of natural resources.



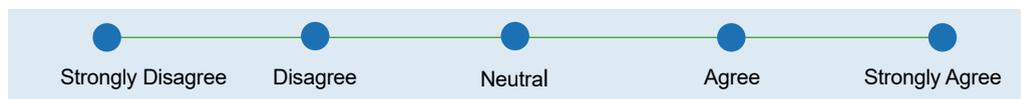
The governance group is sufficiently staffed to manage our natural resources.



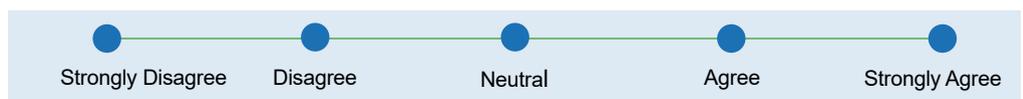
The governance group has enough money to cover the cost of managing our natural resources.



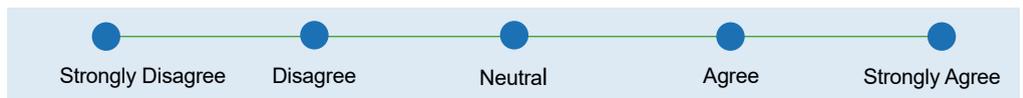
The group has rules and internal regulation written down and made available to the public.



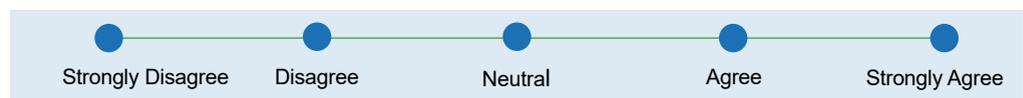
Local government agencies are helping to enforce the group's natural resource management rules and regulations.



The police come and arrest suspects detained by the group.

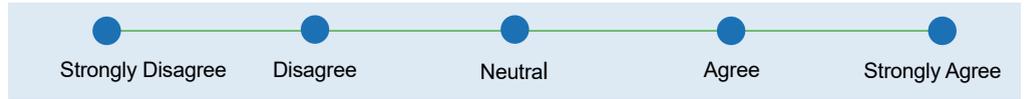


the Governance group is enthusiastic and doing its job.

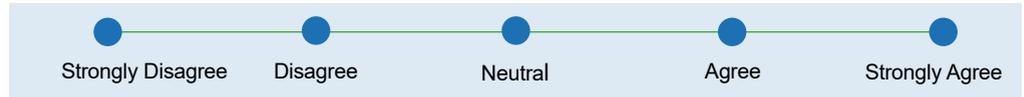


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The governance group has the authority to convene a meeting with senior government officials or other stakeholders.



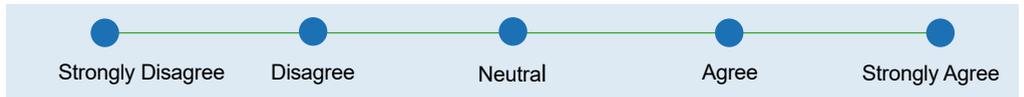
The governance group has the power to influence land management plans or government actions that could affect the resources of the community territory.



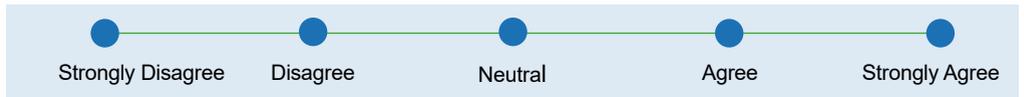
The governance group has the power to ensure that persons detained by the community for violating community laws on its territory are prosecuted by the national judicial system.



The governance group can implement its land management plans without interference from others.



The governance group has the power to prevent people who are not part of the community from using natural resources on the community's territory.



Could you give me two recommendations for the group to improve?

Thank you very much for your time! Do you have something else to add?

APPENDICES**2 Consent procedure for the NRG T**

To comply with social safeguards designed to protect the rights of people who decide to participate in an NRG T survey it is important to secure their consent. The following is a template for describing the NRG T survey to people who may or may not consent to participate in the survey.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. Please listen to the following information carefully. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to improve the governance of the group, by first identifying its strengths and weaknesses.

You were randomly selected amongst [members of the governance group OR community members influenced by them].

STUDY PROCEDURES

I will ask you a series of questions about the group, the survey will take 20 minutes. We will arrange with you a time that is convenient to participate in the survey. We will present the results of the survey at a community meeting after data collection and analyses have been completed.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your responses are anonymous and will not be shared with anybody else from your family, community, or officials. Results of your survey will be used for reports and publications.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about this study please call or send a message to the coordinator of the project and we will come and talk with you.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to give your oral consent. After you give your consent, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have with us, and your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

3 Example of NRG T Factsheet

A TOOL FOR ASSESSING NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE



Fig. 1: USAID, WCS and other partners have developed a diagnostic tool to invest in better governance at the landscape level

INTRODUCTION

USAID through CARPE (Central African Environment Program) is committed to the long-term conservation of Central Africa's forests and wildlife. To achieve this partners who work for the conservation of Central African forests and their national counterparts must help to establish an appropriate regulatory framework, crime prevention support and detection efforts, and build the capacity of government agencies, community groups and civil society to govern access to and use of natural resources within their jurisdictions. To assess the strengths and weaknesses of government agencies and community groups involved in the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, a governance assessment tool has been developed. It is based on relatively simple interviews, and focusing on three basic predictive factors for effective governance.

WHAT IS EFFECTIVE NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE?

Improving management, reducing threats, and achieving long-term conservation objectives requires good governance. To be effective, a natural resource governance group must make decisions and apply rules that ensure the sustainability of the natural resources under their control. In a poorly regulated space, resource and land use practices are often unsustainable. This makes it impossible to ensure the proper conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. The long-term sustainable and effective management of natural resources is then based on representative and democratic governance. In this context, governance is defined by three attributes: authority, capacity and power. If a governance group does not have the power to govern, it will not be effective in the long term.



Figure 2 : A fisherman showing the local charter for sustainable fisheries in Northern Congo, an important step to improve local governance. Credit: M. Bergen

Botswana

Cameroon

Central African
Republic

**Republic of
Congo**

Democratic Republic
of Congo

Gabon

Ivory Coast

Kenya

Madagascar

Namibia

Nigeria

Tanzania

Uganda

Zambia

If a governance group does not have sufficient capacity to govern, it is unlikely to govern access to and use of NR. Finally, if it does not have the political or economic power to exercise its authority, it will not be able to govern effectively.

APPROACH

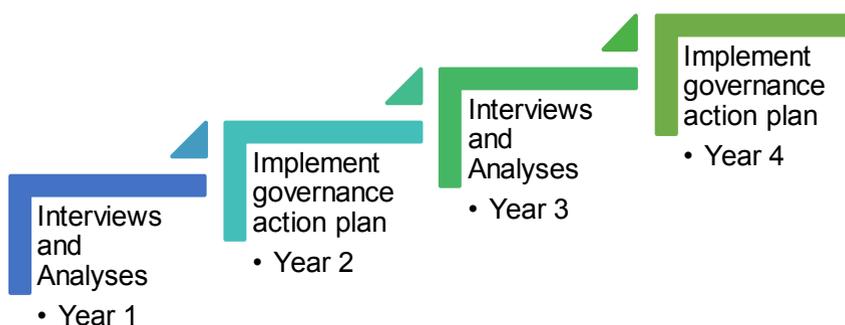
The first step is to formally identify all governance groups with jurisdiction to regulate access to and use of natural resources, and then select those that will participate in this assessment. Then, representatives of each governance group are interviewed, as well as local populations whose livelihood practices can probably be influenced by the decisions and actions of a governance group. These surveys then allow us to be able to assess the authority, capacity and power of each governance group interviewed.

The second step is to analyze the results obtained, identifying where, at the tactical level, we should invest in each group in order to strengthen their capacity to govern.

The third step is to work with these groups to reduce their weaknesses. By repeating the assessment over time, we can assess whether the investments in strengthening natural resource governance have had the desired impact on the target groups.



Figure 3: NRG T Interview. Credit: D. Detoef



BENEFITS OF THE NRG T

This methodology also makes it possible to interview an equitable sample of women and men, of different ages and social categories, to ensure that the different points of view of each individual are taken into account;

This tool can be used at the national, landscape, community or village level.

It can help strengthen governance in any situation where groups of people need to make collective decisions about how to act and enforce the rules that help them live together and achieve common goals.

Three fundamental attributes enable effective governance of natural resources: authority, capacity, and power.

Contacts

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 Function: Socio-economic Assistant ddetoef@wcs.org

Name: Dr. Michelle Wieland
 Function: Socio-Economic Advisor, Africa Program mwieland@wcs.org

www.wcscongloblog.org

WCS– Wildlife Conservation Society, CONGO PROGRAM, B.P. 14537 Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

WCS Mission
 Protecting wildlife and its habitat is WCS’s mission. We achieve this through science, international conservation, education and management of the largest system of urban zoos under the leadership of the Bronx Zoo.



4 NRG T scores calculation

Question ID	Question label	Sub Attribute Calculation	Attribute Calculation
legitimacy1	The governance group has the formal, or traditional, or customary, legal right to make decisions that affect my access to and use of natural resources.	Legitimacy = (legitimacy1 + legitimacy2) / 2	Authority = (Legitimacy + Accountability + Transparency + Participation + Fairness + Diversity) / 6
legitimacy2	I am prepared to allow the governance group to represent my interests and make decisions on my behalf regarding access to and use of natural resources.		
accountability1	If the governance group makes a decision or acts in a way that I disagree with, I can tell them that I disagree with their decision or actions.	Accountability = (accountability1 + accountability2 + accountability3) / 3	
accountability2	When I disagree with the governance group, they take this seriously and think about whether or not they should change their decisions or actions.		
accountability3	If the governance group acknowledges that it has made a wrong decision, it takes action to prevent a recurrence.		
transparency1	All decisions of the governance group that may influence my access to and use of natural resources are made public.	Transparency = (transparency1 + transparency2 + transparency3) / 3	
transparency2	I am informed of all decisions of the governance group that may influence my access to and use of natural resources.		
transparency3	The governance group keeps a record of all decisions it makes that may affect my access to and use of natural resources.		

Question ID	Question label	Sub Attribute Calculation	Attribute Calculation
participation1	I am invited to attend the general meetings of the governance group	Participation = (participation1 + participation2 + participation3 + participation4 + participation5) / 5	
participation2	I am free to express my ideas and concerns during the meetings of the governance group.		
participation3	The governance group is asking me for my opinion on how to manage access to and use of our natural resources.		
participation4	My opinions and those of all community members are taken into account in the decisions made by the governance group to manage access to and use of our natural resources.		
participation5	The governance group is willing to allow any legitimate user of natural resources to join the group's decision-making body if he or she so wishes.		
fairness1	I find that the decisions made by the governance group regarding access to natural resources on our territory are fair because they equally benefit all the rights holders.	Fairness = (fairness1 + fairness2 + fairness3 + fairness4) / 4	
fairness2	When the governance group enforces our natural resource laws, I find that they punish everyone who is caught breaking the laws, not just some people.		
fairness3	The decisions of the governance group are influenced by the community, not just a few people.		
fairness4	The decisions of the governance group are influenced by us and not people who are not part of the community.		

Question ID	Question label	Sub Attribute Calculation	Attribute Calculation
diversity1	Women are well represented in the group and their ideas are listened to and respected.	Diversity = (diversity1 + diversity2) / 2	Capacity = (Knowledge and skills + Resources + Institutional framework + Motivation) / 4
diversity2	Indigenous people are well represented in the group and their ideas are listened to and respected.		
knowledge_skills1	Members of the governance group are qualified to manage our natural resources (i.e., they have the necessary skills and knowledge).	Knowledge and skills = (knowledge_ skills1 + knowledge_skills2)/ 2	
knowledge_skills2	Members of the governance group know how to enforce the rules that govern access to and use of natural resources.		
resources1	The governance group is sufficiently staffed to manage our natural resources.	Resources = (resources1 + resources2) / 2	
resources2	The governance group has enough money to cover the cost of managing our natural resources.		
framework1	The group has rules and internal regulations written down and made available to the public.	Institutional framework = (framework1 + framework2 + framework3) / 3	
framework2	Local government agencies are helping to enforce the group's natural resource management rules and regulations.		
framework3	The police come and arrest suspects detained by the group.		

Question ID	Question label	Sub Attribute Calculation	Attribute Calculation
motivation	The governance group is enthusiastic about doing its job.	Motivation = motivation	
power1	The governance group has the authority to convene a meeting with senior government officials or other stakeholders.	Power = (power1 + power2 + power3 + power4 + power5) / 5	Power = Power
power2	The governance group has the power to influence land management plans or government actions that could affect the resources of the community territory.		
power3	The governance group has the power to ensure that persons detained by the community for violating community laws on its territory are prosecuted by the national judicial system.		
power4	The governance group can implement its land management plans without interference from others.		
power5	The governance group has the power to prevent people who are not part of the community from using natural resources on the community's territory.		

APPENDICES

5 Example of governance action plan

Group	Governance attribute	Objective	Action	Status	Period
CLG	Legitimacy	Legal registration	Help the group to finalize its legal registration	Done	Feb
	Accountability	Finance management clarified	Specify in status/Règlement intérieur how finances are managed, rules for using cotisations, and who takes decisions related to finances and accounting.	To do	Dec
	Transparency	Role and responsibility of the CLG known	Meet with traditional leaders, civil society, other community representatives, LTCR managers, local administration to explain to them the roles, missions and their responsibility.	Done once	Twice a year
	Diversity	Indigenous people and women participate in the decision-making of the CLG.	Elect women and indigenous representatives in the decision-making group. Ensure their participation in decision-making.	Done	Dec
	Knowledge	CLG members know key concepts for their work.	Train the group on conservation, natural resource management, legal texts on protected areas (and provide them with the texts). Train the group on fundraising for their own financial resources.	To do	Dec. Then once a year.
	Resources	Group has its own financial resources	Train the group on project development and fundraising.	To do	Dec. Then once a year
	Power	Power of the group is strengthened	The CLG organizes meetings with the administrative and customary authorities to improve collaboration	To do	Twice a year

APPENDICES

6 Indicators of Natural Resource Governance (NRG) and Organizational Process (OP)

JUST STARTED	IN DEVELOPMENT	ALMOST THERE	PERFECT
AUTHORITY			
Legitimacy: Be recognized and accepted by the majority of the rights holders and users of NRs in its functions and roles in deciding on the rules of access and use of NRs.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Decisions made represent the interests of the members of the group.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Decisions made represent the interests of the community.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Decisions made represent the interests of the entire community and the sustainable management of NR.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Decisions made represent the interests of the entire community and of NR conservation.
<i>OP Indicator:</i> Customary and/or legal recognition with receipt (certified document).	<i>OP Indicator:</i> A mechanism is developed so that the decisions taken can include the interests of the entire community.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> A mechanism to include communities in decision-making is used.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group organizes regular decision-making meetings with the communities.
Accountability: The fact that a governance group (and each with a defined role within the group) takes responsibility and is accountable to the communities.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group's activities are reported to the General Assembly.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group reports on the link between its activities and sustainable NR management.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group is able to demonstrate/report the impact of their activities on NR conservation.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group responds to grievances on NR decisions with appropriate actions.
<i>OP Indicator:</i> Mission, cause, raison d'être, and vision of the group developed and known to members.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Roles and functions of each defined, with a written action plan validated by all members.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Claims (grievance) mechanism under development.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Complaints (grievance) mechanism is functioning and known to users.
Transparency: The openness with which the governance group carries out its work			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The rules/decisions are proposed and validated at the General Assembly.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The rules/decisions made are written and listed.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> All rules/decisions made on use/access to NRs are accessible to everyone.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Rights holders are correctly/regularly informed of the decisions taken.
<i>OP Indicator:</i> Certain decisions on the operation of the Group are made at the Annual General Meeting.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The decisions taken on the operation of the group are written down and recorded.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> All decisions taken on the functioning of the group are accessible to all members.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> All group members are properly/regularly informed of the decisions made by the group.
Participation: The extent to which users and rights holders can participate in decision-making on access to/use of resources, and on sanctions against those who do not comply with accepted standards.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Decisions on access/use of NRs are made only by the members of the group.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Opinions of users and right holders requested and listened to (passive participation/»for«).	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Users and rights holders are consulted for decisions on NR management (participation «with«).	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Users and rights holders actively bring their opinions to the group on their own initiative (self-mobilization, participation «by«).

JUST STARTED	IN DEVELOPMENT	ALMOST THERE	PERFECT
<i>OP Indicator:</i> Group decisions are made by a single person.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> A mechanism is developed to ensure that all members participate actively in the internal decisions of the group.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The mechanism is being implemented to actively involve all members.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> All members of the group take part in the group's activities and contribute their opinions on their own initiative to the decision-making process.
Diversity: The explicit inclusion of all stakeholders (especially women and marginalized groups) in the governance decision-making process and their involvement in the adjudication of offences.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group is aware of stakeholder groups that have different interests.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Opinions of all stakeholders users and rights holders are sought and listened to.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Opinions of all stakeholders users and rights holders taken into account.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group's decisions represent the interests of all stakeholders, users and rights holders.
<i>OP Indicator:</i> Women, marginalized groups and representatives of all clans are part of the governance group (in accordance with the values shared by the group).	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Women and marginalized groups are listened to equally within the group.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Women and marginalized groups have positions of responsibility in the governance group.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Ideas of women and marginalized groups are taken into account on an equal basis with others.
Fairness: Equity ensures that decisions on access to and use of NRs take into account the interests/needs of different groups without excluding anyone.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> NA	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> NA	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> NA	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> NA
<i>OP Indicator:</i> There are discussions with the different stakeholders on their needs and interests (for NR).	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group's activities meet the different needs of its stakeholders.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group's decisions are fair to the various stakeholders.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group has specific activities for the empowerment of the most marginalized stakeholders.
CAPACITY			
Knowledge and skills: The group has the legal and technical knowledge and skills to meet its objectives.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group is aware of the laws and threats that may jeopardize the sustainability of NRs.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group knows what policies/practices to implement to conserve NR/ sustainably use them.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group has an action plan and a monitoring/ evaluation plan that are implemented.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group achieves positive results for the sustainable management of NR through their actions.
<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group has an office and has people who can read and write.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group is familiar with an organization's management/governance tools (foundations of organizational development).	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group uses certain organization management/ governance tools (7S and Integrated Organization Model, Vision/Mission, action plan, etc.).	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group develops and uses its own tools for the management/governance of an organization in an autonomous way.
Resources: Human and material resources, technical tools and financial means.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> NA	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> NA	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> NA	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> NA

APPENDICES

JUST STARTED	IN DEVELOPMENT	ALMOST THERE	PERFECT
<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group has the basic staff and equipment.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group has a detailed budget aligned with its work plan.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The Group has adequate staff and is actively seeking financial resources to meet its needs.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group has a functional working office and the group's income covers all its needs.
Institutional framework: The set of rules, regulations and policies that enable a governance group to manage natural resources sustainably.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group is familiar with forest and wildlife laws.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Rules for access to/use of NRs at local level under development.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Access rules/uses of NRs are adapted to the local context and validated by relevant local stakeholders.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Rules for access/use of NRs are known to all users and local rights holders.
<i>OP Indicator:</i> Official statutes and Internal Regulations of the group available.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Statutes and Internal Regulations are known to the members.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Statutes and Internal Regulations are translated into a manual of procedure.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Statutes and Internal Regulations integrate the importance of sustainable NR management and conservation.
Motivation: The level of willingness of individuals within a group to do their job, to devote time and to defend the interests of their group.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> A minority of the community wants to protect the resources.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> Less than half of the community wants to protect and sustainably manage resources.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> More than half of the community wants to protect and sustainably manage resources.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The majority of the community wants to protect and sustainably manage resources.
<i>OP Indicator:</i> The president is trying to motivate the office to carry out activities.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> Less than half of the group members are active and fulfilling their roles.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> More than half of the group members are active and fulfilling their roles.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> All members of the group are active and fulfill their roles.
POWER			
Power: The ability of a governance group to exercise its authority and to do so without being regularly or repeatedly undermined by other, more powerful groups.			
<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group notifies the competent authorities when laws are not complied with.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The group involves all stakeholders to develop rules, decisions and management plans on NR.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The rules/decisions on access and use of NR are respected and supported by the authorities, the various powerful stakeholders and the community.	<i>NRG Indicator:</i> The rules/decisions on access and use of NRs are applied and followed.
<i>OP Indicator:</i> Members are able to explain the group's vision to the rest of the community.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The Bureau succeeds in enforcing certain internal decisions and part of the group's programme of activity.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The Bureau shall ensure that the group's internal decisions and programme of activities, as well as its authority, are respected.	<i>OP Indicator:</i> The group is respected by community members and capable of acting independently.



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