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## Labelling and certification schemes for Indigenous Peoples' foods

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Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



# Labelling and certification schemes for Indigenous Peoples' foods

Generating income while protecting and  
promoting Indigenous Peoples' values

Alliance



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Cover photo: Food diversity in the Khasi Indigenous People's food system in Meghalaya, India.

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# FOREWORD

*Indigenous Peoples around the world are finding new ways to engage with the market – labelling and certification schemes are some of the solutions to empower them in striving for a more intercultural and systemic market access.*

According to recent estimates, there are 476 million Indigenous persons, or 6.2 percent of the total world's population, living in around 90 countries in seven socio-cultural regions (ILO, 2019; UNDESA, 2009). Their contributions towards the global goal of ending hunger and malnutrition, while preserving biodiversity are manifold. Indigenous persons have persisted as custodians of the planet's food and genetic resources. For instance, around 80 percent of the world's remaining terrestrial biodiversity is present in the territories where Indigenous Peoples live (Sobrevilla, 2008). As a consequence, hundreds of species of edible and nutritious fauna and flora make up the diverse and healthy diets of Indigenous Peoples (FAO and Alliance of Bioversity International, 2021; FAO, 2021). These are the same places where their ancestral knowledge and sustainable land management practices are upheld and handed down over generations.

In recent years, FAO has increased its work with Indigenous Peoples to acquire more knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Peoples' food systems. Among these efforts, FAO has developed and released a series of technical publications concerning: free prior and informed consent (FAO, 2016), Indigenous Peoples' food systems (Kuhnlein *et al.*, 2009, Kuhnlein *et al.*, 2013, FAO and Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, 2021) and Indigenous matrifocal societies (FAO, 2020).

In 2018, FAO hosted the first High-Level Expert Seminar on Indigenous Food Systems in Rome that involved 200 participants, including Indigenous Peoples, researchers and representatives of governments and United Nations agencies. One of the strategic areas to preserve and promote Indigenous Peoples' food systems that was identified during the Expert Seminar - and still relevant until now - was supporting the commercialization of indigenous foods in respecting interculturality, traditional knowledge and indigenous territorial management practices.

History tells us that Indigenous Peoples have been traditionally participating in trade over long distances and among distinct geographic regions for thousands of years on. This trade has been rooted in a plurality of values that in many cases support protection against overexploitation of natural resources and put human well-being and environmental preservation before a single aim of profit. Regrettably, external drivers such as globalization, top-down agricultural development policies, forced displacement, migration to urban areas, climate change, and encroachment of extractive industries have drastically affected the way many Indigenous Peoples' food systems operate. During the last few decades, the proportion of imported and processed foods in the diets of Indigenous Peoples has increased considerably worldwide, while Indigenous Peoples are more and more



engaged in the production of cash crops or other commodities for income generation, to the expense of their traditional food systems.

Holistic market approaches are increasingly seen as tools for Indigenous Peoples to promote and preserve their food systems, while asserting their right to development. Building markets that are respectful of the values, rights, creative work and knowledge systems of Indigenous Peoples, while at the same time generating a fair income, poses a challenge. However, Indigenous Peoples continue to find new ways to engage with the market. Indigenous foods and products have a wide range of intrinsic qualities and biocultural values. Many innovative solutions contain a territorial perspective through which products are valued for their linkages with people, culture and place, as opposed to a linear commodity logic.

In this context, FAO has worked in collaboration with the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), to analyse examples of labelling and certification schemes developed by Indigenous Peoples' or applied in marketing Indigenous Peoples' biocultural products in different regions of the world. The objective of the review was to explore ways in which Indigenous Peoples may engage with the market to generate a fair income while protecting and promoting socio-cultural values in their food systems. The core question of the review was: what makes marketing schemes for Indigenous Peoples successful? The findings highlight the importance of Indigenous Peoples' leadership in defining the quality of territorial products and services according to their knowledge and rights, and effectively communicating messages about this quality to consumers. In turn, consumers, NGOs, researchers, national governments and international organizations can play key roles by providing operational and policy support, for instance to overcome bureaucratic and administrative hurdles. The findings once again teach us that we can all learn from Indigenous Peoples' perspectives. Furthermore, we have

an obligation to do so if we genuinely want to allow alternative worldviews to help shape a development agenda within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals that respects human and cultural identities.

This review entitled "Labelling and certification schemes for Indigenous Peoples' foods: Generating income while protecting and promoting Indigenous Peoples' values" provides an important building block in a much larger vision, which is to enable Indigenous Peoples to continue to be innovators of sustainable markets in favour of biodiversity and nutritional security. To achieve this vision, collaboration among Indigenous Peoples, international organizations and transdisciplinary research will not only be welcome, but much needed. It is our sincere hope that the findings of this review and its guidelines will inspire Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Peoples' organizations, United Nations agencies, governments, policy makers and other stakeholders to devise marketing schemes that are best suited to Indigenous Peoples' local realities and customs. Our final aim is that young Indigenous leaders find inspiration to engage creatively with their traditional food systems and products and harness the opportunity to become leading entrepreneurs. FAO's commitment to Indigenous youth has been stronger over the last few years and we hope that this publication will enable Indigenous youth to engage with elders in their communities to ensure that food items generated by Indigenous Peoples' food systems can access markets without losing their traditional heritage and cosmogony. I truly hope this publication will contribute to the future of Indigenous youth by fostering their economic prospects.

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Elizabeth A. Bechdol  
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In memory of Deajeet Sarangi.

# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

• <b>CKK</b>	Kom Kelluhayin Corporation
• <b>CONAB</b>	National Supply Company (Brazil)
• <b>CSA</b>	Community-supported agriculture
• <b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
• <b>FSC</b>	Forest Stewardship Council
• <b>GI</b>	Geographical indication
• <b>GLIAHS</b>	Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System
• <b>IFOAM</b>	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
• <b>INR</b>	Indian rupee
• <b>INTA</b>	Argentina's National Agricultural Technology Institute
• <b>NESFAS</b>	North East Slow Food and Agrobiodiversity Society
• <b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization

• <b>NZD</b>	New Zealand dollar
• <b>PAA</b>	Food Purchase Program (Brazil)
• <b>PGS</b>	Participatory guarantee system
• <b>PNAE</b>	National School Feeding Program (Brazil)
• <b>POETCom</b>	Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community
• <b>REDAC</b>	The Mexican Network of Tianguis and Organic Markets
• <b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
• <b>TTS</b>	T'nalak Tau Sebu
• <b>UNAM</b>	National Autonomous University of Mexico
• <b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
• <b>UNDRIP</b>	The United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
• <b>URGENCI</b>	The International Community Supported Agriculture Network
• <b>USD</b>	United States dollar



Adivasi style market in Odisha, India  
©Living Farms/Debjeet Sarangi

# 01

## INTRODUCTION

There are more than 476 million Indigenous persons in the world, representing 6.2 percent of the world population (ILO, 2019) and living in some 90 countries (UNDESA, 2009) in seven socio-cultural regions.<sup>1</sup> They own and occupy approximately one quarter of the world's lands and waters, which are home to 80 percent of the world's terrestrial biodiversity

(Sobrevilla, 2008; Garnett *et al.*, 2018). Despite this surrounding wealth, Indigenous Peoples account for 18.7 percent of the extreme poor (ILO, 2019). The definition of Indigenous Peoples' poverty goes beyond the inability to cover basic needs, such as food, clothing, housing and health expenses, to include also issues of poor nutrition, both over and undernutrition, infant mortality, high levels of substance abuse and poor mental health (Gigler, 2009; Kuhnlein *et al.*, 2013).

<sup>1</sup> Africa; the Arctic; Asia; Central and South America and the Caribbean; Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia; North America; and the Pacific.



Indigenous Peoples have persisted against historic injustice, including colonization, dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, oppression and discrimination. In responding to emerging aspirations and needs, Indigenous Peoples have integrated with the market to varying extents, by selling labour or products from their territories to afford goods and services, including health care, education, housing and food (Lasimbang, 2008; Mena-Vásquez *et al.*, 2016).

Indigenous Peoples' food systems include dimensions of environmental protection, community cohesion, social justice and cultural preservation (Godoy *et al.*, 2005; Altman, 2007; Turner, 2016; FAO and Alliance of Bioversity International, 2021; FAO, 2021). Many products derived from Indigenous Peoples' territories are unique in their nutritional and organoleptic properties. They are generated and produced in diversified low-input food systems including agroforestry, settled agriculture, fisheries, hunting, gathering and pastoralism. Product uniqueness is also tied to the spirituality, cosmogony, traditional knowledge, institutions, culture and social and solidarity networks that operate in these food systems (Martí and Pimbert, 2007; Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009; Dove, 2011). For example, fallow management in swidden systems and shifting cultivation enables provision of food products over a long period of time and the regeneration of biodiversity and soil health (Cairns, 2010). Unique crop varieties or animal breeds for meats are maintained through networks of sharing, exchange and shared custodianship (Pimbert, 2009; Altieri and Toledo, 2011; FAO, 2021). Hard work may be shared among community members; distribution of profits is often collective rather than individual; and in some cases, a share of profits may be used to support the disadvantaged in a community. Festivals and spiritual rituals are commonly part of the food system cycle, such as in the case of millets from shifting cultivation systems in northeast India. The linkages between Indigenous Peoples' cosmogony, natural cycles and food generating activities are at the base

of Indigenous Peoples' food systems and are an indicator of a healthy and well-functioning system.

Unfortunately, aspects such as communal values and conservation of biodiversity are poorly recognized and remunerated under the dominant economic system. Economic policies and initiatives based on cost-benefit analysis mostly favour individual, large-scale units that provide vast amounts of homogenised, industrially produced goods at low prices (McMichael, 2005; Reinert, 2007). Meanwhile, external commercialisation efforts that inadequately consider Indigenous Peoples' customary laws and institutions for natural resource governance have been observed to increase economic externalities such as health and nutritional costs, food insecurity and environmental degradation (Beaumier and Ford, 2010; Turner, 2016). Many Indigenous producers have very little control over the pricing of their goods as their bargaining power is limited and they are subjected to the fluctuations of the market. Communities wishing to market their goods must often operate through third parties who take a large chunk of profits (Lasimbang, 2008). Studies have indicated that access to markets may be limited due to absent or inadequate market linkages and infrastructure, or a gap in training facilities fostering economic opportunities for Indigenous Peoples, including Indigenous youth (Patrinos and Skoufias, 2007; Rosado-May *et al.*, 2018). In general, rural producers face various degrees of asymmetric negotiations with intermediaries and middle persons responsible for transport, distribution and sales, depending on their level of remoteness and connectivity. This causes producers to obtain a smaller percentage of the final price paid by the consumers. Besides unfavourable terms in the market and value chains that burden many rural producers, Indigenous Peoples also often face ethnic and cultural discrimination that further impairs their bargaining capacity.

Certification and labelling systems are widely adopted tools in economic development

to confer greater environmental and social accountability, and to create niche markets for unique products derived from sustainable, small-scale production systems. Labels as a form of branding have the potential to communicate the values and story behind biocultural products. Certification schemes entail standards, expressed in rules for production processes and product quality that are verified by an entitled stakeholder from the public or private sector, depending on the case (Swiderska *et al.*, 2016). There are more than 400 voluntary standards for food and agricultural products under the umbrella term “sustainability” (IISD, 2019), which include, for instance, Fairtrade, organic and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), to name a few. Among these, some have been widely adopted and have had considerable impacts on production practices and food markets. For example, global sales of organic food and drinks reached USD 89.7 billion in 2016, with organic agriculture practiced in 172 countries on 43.7 million hectares of agricultural land, managed by approximately 2.3 million farmers (Willer and Lernoud, 2016). As a movement toward social protection, Fairtrade has grown to reach over 1.66 million farmers and workers spread across more than 73 countries participating in the certification scheme. In 2012, the value of the Fairtrade sector reached USD 7 billion (Doherty *et al.*, 2013).

To date, no in-depth review has been conducted to assess the opportunities that certification and labelling schemes may hold specifically for Indigenous Peoples. Under certain conditions these tools could enable trust to be built between producers and consumers to enhance awareness of the specificity of Indigenous Peoples’ products in terms of intrinsic quality (e.g. taste, nutritional properties) and biocultural values (e.g. origin, kinship, reciprocity, and stewardship of people over agricultural biodiversity and the environment). These tools could enable unique products derived from Indigenous Peoples’ food systems to find new ways to enter the market, while promoting the kinship

ethos and environmental sustainability in such systems. Furthermore, participation in certification systems may provide means for Indigenous Peoples to build trust with industry, for example by setting production standards that prohibit timber extraction in their Indigenous territories. A review of 12 initiatives for agroecological markets around the world, some of which include Indigenous Peoples’ communities, found that labels are important as a means to communicate quality, and the main reason to adopt a label was to create an identity for producers or for their vision of agroecology (Loconto, Jimenez and Vandecandelaere, 2018).

While holding potentials to improve the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples, labelling and certification schemes also have some limitations. Widely known certifications such as Fairtrade, organic and forest certifications, have been criticized<sup>2</sup> as being prone to social and economic exclusion at the producer level (Colchester, 2016), co-opting standards into industrial value chains (Jaffee and Howard, 2010; Jaffee, 2012) and having poor consideration of biodiversity and Indigenous Peoples’ issues (Swiderska *et al.*, 2016). In an exhaustive literature review on voluntary certification, FAO contended that overall there was weak evidence on the benefits that private standards have brought to small-scale farmers who produce sustainably, as they often have poor entry and compatibility with market expectations (Loconto and Dankers, 2014). Despite growth of the certified market, profit often still accumulates with large oligopolies that control the supply chain. The prices paid for organic produce from small-scale farmers seldom reflect their real costs of production, including labour costs, adjustments for lean months and the compromise of large volumes of production for sustainability concerns (Bacon, 2010; Jaffee, 2012). Authors of a study co-written by researchers and Indigenous

<sup>2</sup> <https://sustainablelivingassociation.org/the-real-problems-behind-fair-trade/>

Peoples representatives for the World Congress on Agroforestry discussed the potential of upholding Indigenous Peoples' rights in forest certification schemes, with specific reference to FSC (Collier, 2003). They determined that using third-party certification systems to build trust would only be possible with the participation and strong vigilance of Indigenous Peoples.

Thus, while there is potential for these tools to provide benefits to Indigenous Peoples, the conditions needed to secure their benefits for creating favourable economic conditions

in respect of Indigenous Peoples' values, cultures, and identity merits exploration. This review aimed to take a step forward in this regard by 1) reviewing case studies of labelling and certification initiatives focused on enabling favourable economic conditions for the marketing of biocultural products in respect of Indigenous Peoples' values, cultures, and identity; and 2) analysing elements of certification and labelling systems that may have positive or negative impacts in realizing these conditions.

# 02

## LABELLING AND CERTIFICATION OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN THIS REVIEW

This review was especially interested in the role of territorial brands or labels, geographical indications, and other types of labels and certifications in creating favourable economic conditions for the marketing of biocultural products in respect of Indigenous Peoples' values, cultures, and identity. The primary market tools that were considered in the review are described in Box 1. Further information on these different approaches is provided in the following sections, with consideration of the distinct roles these tools could have for Indigenous Peoples.

### 2.1 LABELS

Labelling represents all means of providing information, illustrative or in written form, about the origin, quality, process and ingredients of a product on the packaging or presentation of a product. At producer and processor levels, one of the core features of labels is to assist in differentiating and branding their products in view of gaining market share and price advantages in competitive markets. At consumer level, labels inform and influence consumer purchasing

choices by communicating information on product qualities, such as origin or aspects that connect to sustainability, cultural or health value. Labels can be protected for their Intellectual Property through law-bound trademarks or *sui generis* geographical indications (Box 2).

Indigenous Peoples may develop and use their own labels to communicate the unique qualities, origin and traditional knowledge associated with a product, and to assert their collective rights and vision, by associating the label to a related tailored standard. Together with greater awareness raising and consumer education on the uniqueness and quality of indigenous food products, forms of trust could be built with a caring consumer crowd.

#### 2.1.1 Territorial labels

We use the term "territorial label" to cover the branding strategies that refer to a territory or place, and that can be used for the products originating from a community or a producer from that territory or place. Depending on the standard and level of requirements that support it and its credibility (certification



system), it can work as an indicator of product quality and cultural heritage (Feagan cited in Dos Santos, 2017). It is further connected to competitiveness of food companies and to the renewed appeal and uniqueness of rural territories (Bessi re cited in Dos Santos, 2017). Territorial labels often cover a basket of multiple products and services (Pecqueur, 2001).

### 2.1.2 Geographical indications

A geographical indication (GI) “is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and that possess qualities or a reputation

that are due to that origin” (WIPO, n.d.). The definition of GI comes from the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), agreed in 1995 during the global forum for negotiations on trade goods and services organized by the World Trade Organization (WTO, 2020). A criterion for GI is that the sign must clearly show that the product originates in a given place. The place of origin should also be connected to the status, features and qualities of the product. For these two reasons, the place of production is clearly linked to the product with GI (WIPO, n.d.). In comparison with territorial

## **BOX 1.** Labelling and certification options covered by this review

### **LABELLING**

- **Territorial label:** This term is used in this publication to group together private brands and labels, usually protected under collective or certification trademarks, that refer to a place. Territorial labels usually apply to a range of products that derive from the location.
- **Geographical indication (GI):** A sign that denotes a specific quality product linked to a place. Place names or words and signs associated with the location are used to identify the origin and quality, reputation or other characteristics of a certain product, as defined by international agreements of the World Intellectual Property Organization and the World Trade Organization. They are protected as intellectual property under specific public regulation (called *sui generis*, see Box 2) or as collective or certification trademarks, depending on country legislation.
- **Other labels and standards (not place-based):** This category includes labels and standards that are not obligately linked to a place but that communicate other characteristics of the food and the processes, practices and values applied in its production and marketing. For example, these would include indications signalling the use of organic production practices, heritage crop varieties, or Fairtrade practices, among other possibilities. Like territorial labels, these may be applied to a basket of products.

### **CERTIFICATION**

- **First-party certification:** an internal control by a group of producers or self-certification/ autocertification.
- **Third-party certification:** a control system carried out by a body independent from producers.
- **Participatory guarantee system (PGS):** these are “locally focused quality assurance systems [that] certify producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, social networks and knowledge exchange” (IFOAM - Organics International, 2008).

labels, a GI is registered for a specific product, whereas territorial labels often cover a range of products. Another feature of interest is that GI specifications (associated standard) reflect producers' practices (farmers, fishers or collectors, and processors depending the type of product) and should then be developed by the local community of producers.

Some of the most famous examples of GI include Darjeeling tea in West Bengal, India; Parmigiano Reggiano cheese in Italy; and the Alfonso mango in Goa, India (Raustiala and Munzer, 2007; Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009). There is evidence of the large commercial value that GI commodity chains yield. For instance, 87 tea estates in Darjeeling spread over 17 800 hectares produced 8.5 million kg of tea in 2018 (Ghosal, 2018). The Darjeeling tea quality standard has gained reputation worldwide and more than 80 percent of the tea produced in the region is exported (Ghosal, 2018). Penja pepper – a white pepper grown in the Penja valley's volcanic soil in Cameroon – was the first African product to receive a GI label and this registration has helped to stimulate a six-fold increase in farmers' incomes (FAO, 2018). Some cases of GI have also led to the re-valorisation of products at a local level by including restaurants in the value chain, for instance saffron in Taliouine, Morocco and Mamou chilly in Guinea. A positive spin-off to the promotion of other local products outside the official GI value chain has been documented in the case of local wine in Brazil (Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009).

Geographical indications are a tool that was initially applied by elite producers in order to protect their market share in global trade (Jay and Taylor, 2013). In the last decade or so, GI has been used as a development tool that seeks to give rural producers an equal chance to commercialize products that represent a tie between people and their territories. They are seen as effective tools for economic, social and environmental benefits in cases where production protocols are collectively managed, relevance is given to local know-how, and public support is given for the identification, production, value addition and sale of products

(Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009). Geographical indications are used to avoid appropriation of place names by groups or users who are not linked to the area, including large companies producing immense quantities at a lower price but often with lower environmental and social standards (Giovannucci *et al.*, 2009). An interesting approach to successful GI development, called "constructivist view", is proposed by Champredonde and Muchnik (2012) by which:

*"product qualification exceeds mere product description in a list of characteristics or requirements to be fulfilled. Product quality is thus the result of a process of interactions between the product and the human beings that participate in its qualification. (...) These interactions regard the set of actors: extractors/producers, transformers, production workers, distributors and consumers. (...) From this constructivist perspective, the process of construction of quality is considered as part of a learning process, both individual and collective, in which the representation of objects is built from the knowledge of the actors and the symbolic values they attribute to the qualified object (Champredonde and Muchnik, 2012, p. 8)."*

In re-shaping relations between local and national or international supply chain actors, GI can be seen as a way to support Indigenous Peoples in regaining control over their goods (Laschewski and Penker, 2009; McBride, 2010). For Indigenous Peoples, GI has potential to give a price advantage due to product differentiation and to protect Indigenous producers against fraudulence, as well as to help recognize land and resource rights, and support community-led territorial development. This can for instance be the case when the standards include Indigenous Peoples' land ownership, rights over seed, and recognition of management practices. Territorial management practices linked to the GI can then also produce positive spin-offs such as conservation of biodiversity, sustainable watershed management and management of forest patches, as examples.

**BOX 2.** The legal protection of geographical indications – *Sui generis* systems and trademark laws

*Sui generis* (Latin legal term meaning “of its own kind”) is a term used to describe a legal situation so unique as to preclude any classification into existing categories and requiring the creation of specific texts. In the context of GI, *sui generis* systems entail that public authorities enact legislation dedicated to the specific protection of the GI. This approach generally consists of an official recognition of the GI by granting the status of a public seal of quality, often through a common official logo, where governments can protect the use of the GI *ex officio*. The GI may be considered as a collective *sui generis* right as its use is normally reserved for those producers who respect a code of practice that is defined by a community of producers and approved by a competent authority. The GI is then linked to the geographical place and becomes non transferable.

A GI may in some countries also be protected under trademark law, in the form of a trademark, a certification mark or a collective mark, depending on the categories existing in the country. A trademark is a distinctive sign that is used by a firm to identify itself and its products or services to consumers. It is a type of intellectual property involving a name, word, phrase, logo, symbol, design, image, or a combination of these elements. Geographical terms or signs cannot be registered as trademarks if they are merely geographically descriptive or geographically mis-descriptive. However, if a geographical sign is used in such a way as to identify the source of the goods or services, and if consumers have over time come to recognize it as identifying a particular company, manufacturer or group of producers, it no longer describes only the place of origin, but also the “source” of the uniqueness of the goods or services. At this point, the sign has thus acquired a “distinctive character” or “secondary meaning” and can therefore be trademarked. It is important to note that standards and norms that have to be established in order to register a trademark do not necessarily specify the links between local resources and the quality of the product, nor provide a guarantee system.

**Source:** Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009.

2.1.3 Other labels and standards

In contrast to the two former types of labels that are based on their geographical link, this review was also interested in the role of other labels and standards that are not specifically place-based. These labels communicate various values and practices followed in food generation and marketing, including environmentally sound and socially respectful approaches. This category includes many voluntary schemes, such as organic and Fairtrade, under which many Indigenous producers may opt to certify their products. The development of such a scheme entails costs, monitoring arrangements and

quality assurance processes that need to be assessed and costed vis-à-vis the benefits. There is no global scheme that recognizes Indigenous Peoples’ food generation and collection methods per se as a distinct standard, or that is governed by an Indigenous Peoples’ organization. However, there have been positive examples of local and national experiences that are worth further analysing to extrapolate to other realities and levels of production.

2.2 CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Labels alone do not necessarily imply that specific production rules have been followed

or provide quality assurance per se, whereas standards and related certification systems need to be associated to allow the label to give a credible promise and build trust. Certification is “a procedure through which written or equivalent assurance states that a product, process or service conforms to specified requirements” (Corsin, Funge-Smith and Clausen, 2007, p. 2). Certification can be ensured by a governing body in the case of public standard (either directly or by delegation to a private certifier) or by private stakeholders in the case of a private standard. First-party or self-certification is made by producers themselves or their representatives, second party certification is ensured by the buyer, and third-party certification is ensured by an independent and competent certifier. An interesting hybrid certification is the participatory guarantee system (PGS), which has developed especially for organic certification, through which producers and other external actors (including NGOs, experts and consumers) provide the inspections to obtain the certification. More detail on these certification systems is provided below.

### 2.2.1 First-party certification

A first-party verification is a guarantee provided by the producers themselves, built on automatic controls by individual producers, or internal controls by a GI producer organization. This self-verification system makes the producers take responsibility for the reliability of quality attributes. The producers can sign a formal document (a self-attestation) either individually or through a producers' association. The system functions due to social sanctions and trust relationships based on cultural and geographical proximity. Self-verification is a form of certification applicable to small-scale agricultural and artisan producers, selling through local markets (Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009).

### 2.2.2 Third-party certification

third-party certification schemes involve the provision of written assurance (a certificate) by an independent body that the product,

service or system in question meets specific requirements. The independent body may be a private, public or joint public-private body that should have no direct interest in the economic relationship between the supplier and the buyer (Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009). Standards for certification of products are recognized globally (ISO/IEC 17065), and each country has established a national framework for guarantee systems for export products, adhering to international standards (Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009). In this review we look at voluntary standards, meaning standards that can be adopted on a non-mandatory basis by operators. For instance, Fairtrade standards are set by members, industry, scientists and advisors from the private and public sector (Loconto and Dankers, 2014).

### 2.2.3 Participatory guarantee systems

participatory guarantee systems “are locally focused quality assurance systems (...) that certify producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, social networks and knowledge exchange” (IFOAM - Organics International, 2008). Recognising the difficulty small-scale farmers face in accessing third-party certification, which is often costly and burdensome, PGS was developed as an alternative. It requires producers and consumers to work closely together to build up economic exchange based on networks of trust and collective decision making.

Forms of PGS were developed autonomously in France, Japan and the USA in the 1960s and in Latin America in the 1990s through the Latin American Agroecology Movement (MAELA - acronym in Spanish), which includes many Indigenous producers and community members. Individual PGS producer networks later defined a set of core principles that were endorsed by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) - Organics International, which triggered further advocacy and discussion around PGS at the international level. Existing PGS around

the world are designed and implemented in distinct ways, depending on social and cultural contexts and production systems, which is why there is no single PGS process. However, at the core of all PGS cases lies the principle of collective standard setting and flat hierarchies throughout the verification process for organic products. These commonalities have been conceptualized by IFOAM - Organics International as summarized in Table 1.

Each PGS differs slightly in its motivation. Some are seen mainly as tools to achieve market access, while others are linked with territorial markets and additional activities such as awareness raising on biodiversity. The process focuses on harnessing the opportunities and richness of local food systems in their socio-ecological contexts (Nelson *et al.*, 2010; Home *et al.*, 2017). Many PGS around the world also involve awareness raising and other collective activities, such as marketing, savings systems or seed banks (Bouagnimbeck, 2014). India, Brazil

and Mexico are leading nations that have officially recognized PGS within their organic laws as a result of negotiations between the governments and local movements, including Indigenous Peoples.

Participatory guarantee systems can empower Indigenous Peoples to take greater control over the way their food is produced and traded. Given that fellow producers are those who verify the standards, the certification is normally better embedded in the socio-cultural context and provides for greater flexibility between different production systems, families and communities. Participatory guarantee systems provide for an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to access organic local markets, build relationships with consumers, and at the same time foster knowledge exchange, socio-cultural values, and institutional capacity building. The social capital built in these systems could also be applied in other certification systems that communities may adopt.

**TABLE 1.** Key principles and normative aims of PGS

<b>Key principle of PGSs</b>	<b>Normative aims of PGSs</b>
<b>Shared vision</b>	Belief in and active realisation of holistic philosophy of organic agriculture; Agreement upon core principles guiding the system’s social focus on organic agriculture.
<b>Participatory</b>	Grassroots organization with the intense involvement of farmers, consumers and other interested stakeholders of the organic community (researchers, NGOs...); Credibility of production quality relies on mutual application of rules for organic production.
<b>Transparency</b>	Every member is fully aware of decision processes and how guarantee mechanisms work; Methodological guidelines are clearly communicated and information sources are accessible to all interested parties.
<b>Trust and integrity</b>	Social and cultural control is ensured by trust among members; Organic integrity and its measuring is central to the certification process.
<b>Horizontality</b>	Power sharing guarantees democratic verification of the organic quality; every member has the same responsibility and capacity.
<b>Learning process</b>	Construction of knowledge networks among all PGS actors; Permanent process of learning supports capacity development.

Source: IFOAM (2019).

# 03

## METHODOLOGY

The first step of the review process was to identify examples of labelling and certification approaches used by Indigenous Peoples and applied in marketing Indigenous Peoples' biocultural products. Once the list was compiled, the examples were screened, classified by categories of economic tools, and a selection of case studies was identified for further analysis. The methods and criteria followed for the review are described in greater detail below.

### 3.1 IDENTIFICATION OF CASE STUDIES

A mixed approach was used to identify examples, which involved a network survey and literature review. A survey of experts and stakeholders connected to marketing in Indigenous Peoples' communities was conducted following a snowball sampling technique. The survey started with the task force members of the study, which included 18 researchers and experts from FAO, the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, the Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty (TIP), the French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD) and the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). The members were requested to share examples of relevance to the study, as well as contact information for others who could provide further inputs. The same process was then followed for the contacts that they provided

and so forth. In the end, 52 people suggested case studies for the review. Inputs from the contacts were received by email, virtual meeting or telephone, depending on their preferences.

Additional examples were identified by a review of reports, articles, academic books and grey literature. The literature reviewed covered a broad range of journals and scientific disciplines, including literature focused on development and food system transitions. The aim of this broad outreach was to build an understanding of how benefits are perceived by actors from different cultural, social, ethical and professional backgrounds, and most importantly Indigenous Peoples. The information collected through interviews and written material were combined and crosschecked throughout the review process in order to identify crosscutting issues that were pertinent and of interest for successful initiatives.

### 3.2 DOCUMENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDIES

In total, 64 examples were recommended and identified through the network survey and literature review. Basic information was documented for each example including 1) key actors of the initiative, 2) motivations behind the initiative, 3) the location and 4) the operational processes. This information was gathered through a review

of published information and interviews with knowledgeable contacts. Out of the 64 examples, 11 were selected for more detailed analysis. The selection was focused on labelling and certification initiatives that enabled favourable economic conditions for the marketing of biocultural products while protecting and promoting Indigenous Peoples' values. Priority was given to initiatives led by Indigenous Peoples community organizations. However, since few examples of geographical indications and certification schemes were identified that were led by Indigenous Peoples, a few cases were included that could provide insight into these tools, which focused on marketing Indigenous Peoples' biocultural products or that involved Indigenous Peoples to some degree. Priority in the selection was also given to cases for

which information on the processes and benefits was accessible in the literature and interviews with informants. Examples were selected that showed the most robust evidence or promise of economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits, noting that evidence was nevertheless limited for many cases.

Not all examples recommended by the informants concerned labelling and certification schemes. Some informants broadened out to agritourism initiatives, collaborative initiatives with restaurants and community-supported agriculture (CSA). Although the review was mainly concerned with certification and labelling initiatives, one example of CSA was included in the review that did not involve labelling and certification but otherwise matched the criteria of the study.



# 04

## CASE STUDIES

Indigenous communities are taking part in different approaches aiming at reaching the market in a sustainable way. The examples showcased in this review combine labelling and certification options in various ways. The case studies are presented according to the labelling approach, starting with examples of territorial labels, followed by cases of GI and then other (non-place based) labels and standards.

### 4.1 TERRITORIAL LABELS

The territorial labels included in this review include the Mapuche ethical label from Chile, the Hua Parakore Indigenous label from New Zealand, the Last Forest Products label from India, and the Chakra label from Ecuador.

#### 4.1.1 Mapuche ethical label, Chile

- **Indigenous Peoples:** Mapuche
- **Location:** Villarrica and Panguipulli communes, Araucanía Region, Chile
- **Label:** Territorial label
- **Certification:** PGS
- **Products:** Quinoa, vegetables and fruits
- **Stakeholders involved:** Driven by Kom Kelluhayin Corporation and We Mapu Agro-Industrial and Forestry Cooperative of Agroecological Producers, supported by Temuco Catholic University and CETSUR
- **Sources:** Interview with Allison Loconto (French National Institute for Research

on Agriculture, Food and Environment, INRAE) complemented by literature review (Productores Agroecológicos We Mapu, 2011; Stephens, 2013; Loconto and Hatanaka, 2017; Loconto, Jimenez and Vandecandelaere, 2018)

In the Araucanía region of southern Chile, the Mapuche ethical label (Sello Ético Mapuche, in Spanish) has been developed by the Kom Kelluhayin Corporation (CKK - acronym in Spanish) to preserve and promote Mapuche traditional knowledge, culture and gastronomic traditions through market valorisation. Kom Kelluhayin Corporation is a farmers' association that brings together Mapuche families from the municipalities of Villarrica and Panguipulli. The association was formed initially in 1979 with a focus on farmer education in response to a void in state support. The legal structure of CKK was defined in 1999 and it was officially registered as an NGO in 2010. The We Mapu Agro-Industrial and Forestry Cooperative of Agroecological Producers (Cooperativa agroindustrial y silvícola de productores agroecológicos We Mapu, in Spanish) was created in 2012 as a commercial platform for CKK. Today, approximately 250 families participate in the initiative.

The standards, particularly for quinoa, were developed by the executive committee of Mapuche farmers. Seed custodians and scientists from the Temuco Catholic



University provided additional expertise in writing these standards. The civil society organization CETSUR was involved in facilitating workshops to develop the initial standards. The products are free of agro-chemicals and genetically modified seeds, generated with family labour under solidarity and fair trade principles, using practices that conserve biodiversity and promote knowledge exchange (Stephens, 2013). The producers combine traditional approaches and agroecological practices in realizing these standards. The executive committee of Mapuche farmers meets twice per year to discuss, review and revise the standards.

Product quality is certified through a form of PGS. The seal is assigned by a review committee following a farm visit. The review committee is made up of farmers because: 1) they are knowledgeable about natural or agroecological production; 2) they are seed custodians; and 3) they hold knowledge about Mapuche cosmogony. In recent years, the original group has expanded to include consumers into the review committees. The Cocineras Mapuche (Mapuche Cooks, in English) were the first ‘consumers’ to participate in the review committees because of their strong tradition of linking food preparation directly with growing techniques and because the majority are members of farm families. They remain active members with regards to verifying the food generation practices.

As a result of historic agricultural modernization efforts and suppression of Indigenous Peoples’ identity, Mapuche agricultural practices had been widely lost and abandoned in the region. With the creation of CKK and action taken, such as the creation of standards, the Mapuche have begun to reclaim their traditional agricultural practices. This resurgence is part of a general process of re-appropriation of Mapuche culture, including language, social traditions and food. For example, each community has a cultural centre that offers language classes, and a local radio station includes daily Mapuche vocabulary and

spiritual guidance. Producers, restaurants, and consumers associate the Mapuche label with sustainability and the products are popular among the locals and tourists. We Mapu Agro-Industrial and Forestry Cooperative of Agroecological Producers has invested in increasing its processing and sales capacity to keep up with the growing demand.

#### 4.1.2 Hua Parakore Indigenous label, New Zealand

- **Indigenous People:** Māori
- **Location:** New Zealand
- **Label:** Territorial label
- **Certification:** PGS
- **Stakeholders involved:** Driven by Te Waka Kai Ora (National Māori Organics Authority of Aotearoa), supported by Slow Food International
- **Products:** Vegetables, milk, meat, fish and more
- **Sources:** Interview with Moko Morris (New Zealand Soil and Health Association/Hua Parakore food producer) and Anaru Fraser (Ngāmuka Puna Trust) complemented by literature review (Hutchings *et al.*, 2012; Moeke-Pickering *et al.*, 2015; New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2017)

The Hua Parakore label is about supporting Māori well-being though commercial, community and home growing of Hua Parakore food and products. Hua Parakore is relevant to tribal, community and family level production and reflects how self-sufficiency acts as a primary driver of Māori food production as opposed to purely market-driven economic outcomes. It creates a pathway for Māori growers to tell their *kaupapa Māori*<sup>3</sup> (according to Māori customs and values) production story and to honour the narratives handed down to them from one generation to the next.

<sup>3</sup> Indigenous names are noted in italic throughout the publication.

The Hua Parakore verification was initiated in 2012. As with many other Indigenous Peoples' communities, Māori producers responded to growing food insecurity by taking back control of food strategies for their community (Moeke-Pickering *et al.*, 2015). After a considerable amount of reflection among producers on what kind of added value a scheme would provide, they carefully evaluated niche markets that could be targeted without disrupting the local food system or creating inequalities among producers. The scheme was implemented when it was clear that the Māori producers had established a strong, coherent and collective value system, trust among different socio-economic strata, and support from the health industry and national food associations. This foundation allowed them to enter the market easily on their own terms, deciding which products they would like to sell, negotiating a fair price, and telling their own story behind the production of specific indigenous products. Participatory guarantee system is used in the Hua Parakore scheme to ensure the credibility of the label.

The label is managed by Te Waka Kai Ora (The National Māori Organics Authority of Aotearoa). Hua Parakore contributes to well-being and supports the potential of Māori communities to transform and re-invigorate *rangatiratanga* (self-determination), *te oranga o te whānau* (family well-being), community development, and *kaitiakitanga* (cultural and environmental sustainability). It is also a means by which to demonstrate resistance to biopiracy, biotechnology and neo-liberal free trade policies, which continue to act as a vehicle to displace and colonise Indigenous Peoples globally. Thus, Hua Parakore as a system represents a tool for market governance that communicates the need and possibility of alternative trade that links equity, Indigenous Peoples' value systems and environmental sustainability.

Six *kaupapa* (inter-related principles) were identified as being central to Hua Parakore production through a community driven consultative process, which can be described as

follows: 1) *whakapapa* (connections, interactions and relations), 2) *wairua* (spiritual health and peace), 3) *mana* (autonomy, security and self-determination), 4) *māramatanga* (insight and enlightenment), 5) *te ao tūroa* (the natural order) and 6) *mauri* (life-force) (Hutchings *et al.*, 2012). Producers apply the principles of Hua Parakore in drawing upon their knowledge, support of elders and Hua Parakore resources and they are formally recognized through farmer-to-farmer verification (Hutchings *et al.*, 2012). Given the geographical and agroecological diversity in New Zealand, the protocols and standards vary to allow for individual needs and tribal differences that support individual values and *tikanga* (Māori concept meaning traditional rules, customs, methods, or laws for conducting life). This approach is important to enable access for marginalised production systems and producers. For instance, avoidance of grey water pollution is a criterion that is important in some areas where washing clothing in the garden is practiced, meanwhile fishing quotas may be important for sea-dwellers. Documentation of practices is done through writing their story, based on Indigenous Peoples' values. It is recognized that growing good food and writing about growing good food require two different skill sets therefore, other means such as videos or audio recording can be applied.

While demand certainly is a driver for sales and production, many products for sale in Hua Parakore are chosen by producers themselves before seeking adequate niche markets. Providing for immediate family and community is a priority for most growers. Informants felt it was important to mention that several traditional plants and associated knowledge, such as some relevant to medicinal plants, are kept outside the formal market.

Māori values are by law to be respected, as per the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty provides Māori people with legal instruments to object reforms or trade policies that do not respect Māori values. The government, as Treaty Partners, are reminded that under Article 1, they have a duty and responsibility to protect Māori in pursuing their rights specified in

Article 2, which:

*"guarantees to the Chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand and to the respective families and individuals thereof the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession (New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2017)."*

In addition, each party to the Treaty must be treated equally one to the other. Continuous vigilance to protect these values in New Zealand's agricultural and food industry is seen as vital to ensure the viability and self-determined sustainability norms of Hua Parakore.

Non-Māori people requesting to collaborate on the Hua Parakore label is a challenge that might make it more difficult in the future to ensure that the Indigenous identity is maintained under the system, and to avoid co-optation by a more homogenous standard. To this end, the original Māori language, *te reo*, is seen as a strong protection because non-Indigenous actors cannot copy idiosyncratic, identity-based regulations easily. Another challenge has been to link more local markets and consumers to products sold under the label as the demand has grown. In response, new initiatives have been developed to maintain an integrity-based indigenous framework, which include awareness raising in schools, educational programs developed with Māori Universities and liaison with the local Slow Food movement. An unforeseen outcome of the Hua Parakore framework was its ability to be transferred to other situations, for example as a framework for indigenous management plans.

### 4.1.3 Last Forest Products, India

- **Indigenous Peoples:** Toda, Paniya, Irula, Kurumba, Kuruchiya, Mullukurumba
- **Location:** Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, Tamil Nadu, India

- **Label:** Territorial Label
- **Certification:** PGS
- **Products:** Spices, herbs, honey and coffee
- **Stakeholders involved:** Keystone Foundation & Last Forest
- **Source:** Interview with Mathew John (Keystone Foundation & Last Forest)

Since 1993, Keystone Foundation has been working in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve with Adivasi<sup>4</sup> communities on improving and sustaining their livelihoods, maintaining their unique cultures, assisting conservation efforts and ensuring access to markets. Keystone's approach is defined as "eco-development", which means that the principle that development can happen only when both the needs of people and the needs of the land they live on, are in harmony. Participatory guarantee system was successfully adopted by Keystone Foundation to actively support Indigenous Peoples' forest-based activities. The Last Forest label was established and applied to a range of products certified under PGS, including spices, coffee and honey.

Forest Rock honey is one of the unique products that was selected for certification. The honey is intrinsically linked to ecological conservation within the forest landscape and protection of traditional ecological knowledge and practices of the Indigenous Peoples. In particular, the harvesting technique involves breathing into tree cavities where hives are located, which has the effect of calming the bees down. The extraction ensures minimal disturbance. These practices ensure that the forest produce is extracted in a way that allows regeneration and continuous yield – something that is impossible if the whole colony is destroyed.

Keystone Foundation realised the need

<sup>4</sup> The term 'Adivasi' designates the Indigenous Peoples in India.

to facilitate linkages between producers, retailers and market operators to accommodate for the communities' harvests. For instance, when a product is not available due to seasonal limitations or priority is given to regrowth of wild resources, different products will be on offer on the shelves of shops. Thus, shared understanding of the need for sustainable consumption is created between stakeholders.

Through the scheme, communities ensure continuity of their traditional practice and knowledge associated with honey collection, while also availing of economic benefits. It was reported that in 2010, the price of honey sold on the organic market increased from INR 100 to INR 140<sup>5</sup>/kg. In 2015, it increased to over INR 220<sup>6</sup>/kg. The additional premium that communities receive from the certified products encourages them to continue their ancient traditional practices. However, pressure to produce larger quantities is also seen as a potential pressure on the forest in the future.

#### 4.1.4 The Chakra label, Ecuador

- **Indigenous Peoples:** Kichwa, Kijus
- **Location:** Province of Napo, Ecuador
- **Label:** Territorial label
- **Certification:** PGS
- **Products:** Vegetables, fruits, meat
- **Stakeholders involved:** Provincial Government of Napo, FAO, Global Environment Fund, and others
- **Source:** Interview with Jhony Zapata (Forest and Farm Facility in FAO, FFF), complemented by literature review (Coq-Huelva *et al.*, 2017; Zarate, 2019)

<sup>5</sup> Applying an average UN Operational Rate of Exchange for 2010 (1 USD = 46.4 INR). Equivalent to a price increase from United States dollars (USD) 2.20 to USD 3.00.

<sup>6</sup> Applying an average UN Operational Rate of Exchange for 2015 (1USD = 64.1 INR). Equivalent to USD 3.40.

On November 14th, 2019, the Chakra label was launched by the provincial Government of Napo through the "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, Forests, Soil and Water to Achieve the Good Living (Buen Vivir/Sumac Kasay) in the Napo Province" project funded by the Global Environment Fund and implemented by the Napo provincial Government and the Ministry of Environment of Ecuador, with technical assistance from FAO through the Forest and Farm Facility mechanism and other cooperation entities. The label is an important promotional initiative to enable Kichwa and Kijus agroforestry producers to make an income from selling their products, while preserving their unique culture and traditions.

Chakra is an agroforestry system based on traditional knowledge that embodies Indigenous Peoples' values and cosmogony. It features polycultures that integrate diverse crops, trees and livestock, while also maintaining significant forest area to generate food and income (Coq-Huelva *et al.*, 2017; Zarate, 2019). In the Chakra, the role of women embodied in the *chakramamas* is fundamental for the development and transmission of knowledge. The Chakra label narrates the story of this system as a space of dialogue between the sociocultural and the natural, where food, medicine, knowledge and life itself are cultivated.

The label targets mainly local markets and puts great emphasis on raising awareness among consumers in the Napo area about the unique socio-cultural dimension of the Chakra system, the nutritional value of local products and the contribution of agroforestry systems to biodiversity conservation. More than 150 food products will be sold under the label, including vegetables, fruits, fish and meats.

Participating stakeholders of the initiative are developing a PGS for the award of the Chakra seal. The standards developed are based on the principles of the Chakra

system, which allow producers from more than 60 bio-enterprises of Napo to differentiate their products in the domestic market, while maintaining their sustainable and traditional practices. Parallel to the development of the PGS, Napo's producer organizations, in search of obtaining international recognition for the important goods and services generated by the Chakra, have been leading the process to achieve recognition as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS), granted by FAO. The GIAHS will be supporting the territorial development and conservation of the system and will position the benefits of Chakra and its products in the global arena.

## 4.2 GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS

Three case studies of GI were included in this review: 1) Northern Neuquen creole goat meats from Argentina; 2) T'nalak handicrafts in the Philippines; and 3) Sateré-Mawé Waraná in Brazil. The T'nalak handicrafts case study was included as a biocultural product that could provide additional insight into the role of GI in enabling fair market access for Indigenous Peoples biocultural products in support of their values. Each of the GI cases presented here differ considerably in their motivations, leadership and process followed for establishment, as well as their perceived benefits, as discussed in the following sections.

### 4.2.1 Northern Neuquen creole goat meats, Argentina

- **Indigenous Peoples:** Mapuche, Mestizos people
- **Location:** Patagonia, Argentina
- **Label:** GI
- **Certification:** First-party certification

with guidance of public institutions

- **Products:** Goat meat products
- **Stakeholders involved:** Argentina's National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA), FAO
- **Source:** Interview with Marcelo Champredonde (INTA) complemented by literature review (Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009)

The GI for Northern Neuquen creole goat (Chivito criollo del Norte Neuquino, in Spanish) was established with the motivation to improve territorial development in the Patagonian region to enhance incomes for local herders while recognising their land rights, and at the request of producers. Criolla Neuquina is a local goat breed from Patagonia in Argentina, produced only in high mountain pasturelands based on the traditional knowledge of herders. The development of the breed is attributed to the Pehuenche people, who have a long history as llama breeders and who became involved in raising goats, sheep, cattle, horses and other livestock introduced by the Spanish. Breeding of this specific animal is based around migratory herding practices (transhumance).

Argentina's National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA) supported a participatory process to identify, conserve and improve the goat breed, and eventually supported producers' discussions to set up the rules for a GI based on local know-how. Using a specific methodology for animal genetics, it was possible to establish a link between meat quality, local knowledge and environmental sustainability. The GI initiative also led to a greater recognition of the importance of land rights for livestock keepers.

In its strategy, Indigenous communities were mobilised in recognition of their unique contribution to landscape preservation, while at the same time raising awareness among agricultural ministers. Together this strong network and trust building between extension services, local governments and communities



led to the creation of a participatory production protocol that included land management practices linked with meat quality, which ultimately sought to attract consumer demand. The scheme also defined the control plan and traceability system for the certification by partnering with the local slaughterhouse.

Despite a strong start, five years later the capacity of extension services, to support collective action, declined. At the same time, there was a lack of commitment of market intermediaries to purchase and commercialize this specific quality meat. There was an attempt from young breeders to organize the distribution channel themselves but they were lacking resources for transportation. In the end, the GI project was terminated because a viable market linkage was not established. This case illustrates a key element to consider in the early stages of any GI process, which is the link to the market. Relevant market niches need to be identified and related players need to be associated and involved in the strategy to “play the game” when the GI is registered, or producers need to have the capacity on their own to develop direct sales or short value chains.

#### 4.2.2 T’nalak handicraft, the Philippines

- **Indigenous People:** T’boli
- **Location:** The Philippines
- **Label:** GI
- **Certification:** First-party certification
- **Products:** Handicraft
- **Stakeholders involved:** T’nalak Tau Sebu (TTS) Inc., REDD - Sharing knowledge for ethical and tasty food, the European Union Trade Related Technical Assistance Project 3 (TRTA3).
- **Source:** Email exchange with Jenita Eko (President of TTS) and interview with Peter Damary (REDD) complemented by literature review (Cairns, 2010; TRTA3, 2017; IPOPHL, 2017; HLPE, 2017)

T’nalak is a sacred cloth woven by the T’boli people in communities around Lake Sebu, Mindanao island. T’nalak handicraft is promoted in the form of a GI by the T’nalak Tau Sebu (TTS), a group of more than 800 women weavers. The aim of the GI is to harness the export potential of Traditional T’nalak handicraft products and preserve the cultural traditions tied to the cloth.

T’nalak holds great significance in the lives of the T’boli. It is used in rites for different life stages, including marriages. During the *slai i* (prearranged marriage) rituals, T’nalak is one of the *kimu* (traditional properties) that is exchanged, along with other items such as gongs, horses, work animals, ancient swords and other artifacts. The T’nalak cloth is given by the bride-to-be to her groom-to-be. At wedding ceremonies, it is exchanged for a *bolo* (long, sharp edged knife) during the *sogu* (exchange of vows of commitment). This is then followed by the giving of a cow or carabao in exchange for a T’nalak cloth. The T’nalak, with all its cultural and spiritual significance is a proud symbol of a rich heritage and a strong bond between the old and the new generations of T’boli. The intricately handspun T’nalak fabric preserves T’boli traditional knowledge, beliefs and cultural practices.

In 2017, the T’boli weavers managed to secure a collective trademark from the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) in order to prevent producers from outside the territory from selling their handicraft under the same name. The collective trademark counts nine member organizations. The process of securing the trademark was supported by the Trade Related Technical Assistance Project 3 (TRTA 3) of the European Union, which facilitated links between producer groups and a process to collectively define the code of practice. In the standard, an emphasis is put on the rule that real T’nalak handicraft patterns must derive from the dreams of weavers. The TTS seal indicates the cloth is of excellent quality and made from raw materials originating

from the territory. The traceability of the certification is made with serial numbers and seals that are attached to the final products (IPOPFL, 2017). As a result of the initiative, eight hundred women weavers now have greater potential for financial gain and liberation from dependency on their husband's income (TRTA, 2017). There are also cultural benefits through the revival of traditional processes and rituals that make traditional T'boli cloth.

Some community members and project actors have framed this activity, in particular the production of fibres from abacá (*Musa textilis* Née, Musaceae), as an exit strategy from shifting cultivation. Shifting cultivation is an important practice in many Indigenous Peoples' food systems that supports biodiversity and delivers important subsistence and socio-cultural needs. Its complete replacement by more commodity-oriented employment opportunities could be detrimental to the subsistence benefits of the Indigenous Peoples' food system (Cairns, 2010; HLPE, 2017). This is one aspect to be careful about in the long run when promoting T'lanak handicraft for improved income while promoting and protecting Indigenous Peoples' value systems. Moreover, in some cases, the cloth has been transformed into handbags and shoes, which was seen by some as a questionable act, because traditional T'boli custom interprets the placement of cloth near human feet as an insult.

In these ways, the case illustrates a challenge in marketing Indigenous Peoples' products regarding how to integrate traditional knowledge, spirituality and cosmogony into modern ways, without sacrificing Indigenous Peoples' values in favour of the commercialization of the items and customs. Many of Indigenous Peoples' crafts and tools hold a significance that expands beyond the physicality of the object itself. Objects are embodied with spiritual significance and rites that often get neglected when sold in the market as mere objects. When undertaking GI or other marketing approaches, this should be remembered and taken into consideration.

### 4.2.3 Sateré-Mawé Waraná, Brazil

- **Indigenous People:** Sateré-Mawé
- **Location:** Andirá-Marau, Amazonas-Pará, Manaus, Brazil
- **Label:** GI
- **Certification:** First-party certification
- **Products:** Guarana, other fruits and vegetables
- **Stakeholders involved:** Consortium of Sateré-Mawé Producers, Integrated Ethno development Project, FAO, Slow Food International
- **Source:** Literature review (CPSM, 2008; Filoche and Pinton, 2014; Future Market Insights, 2016; Loconto, Jimenez and Vandecandelaere, 2018; Congretel and Pinton, 2020; Martins and Vasconcellos, 2020)

*Waraná* (*Paullinia cupana* var. *sorbilis* (Mart.) Ducke, Sapindaceae, known as guarana in English) originates from the territories of the Sateré-Mawé and is deeply rooted in their traditions and cosmovision (Filoche and Pinton, 2014; Congretel and Pinton, 2020). The Sateré-Mawé consider themselves as the sons of *waraná* because of its role in their origin story and they consider it a primary source of knowledge and council (Congretel and Pinton, 2020). The caffeine-rich seeds have become a popular ingredient for soft drinks and food supplements as the production of guarana has expanded to other communities and regions in Brazil. The global guarana market is expected to be valued at USD 7.4 billion by the end of 2026 (Future Market Insights, 2016) and the plant has been a focus of agricultural research and policies to upscale production. The GI for Sateré-Mawé Waraná from the Andirá-Marau indigenous area is an initiative amidst a struggle to regain recognition for Indigenous Peoples' ownership over *waraná* and to enable the Sateré-Mawé to generate income from the growing market to support their livelihoods.

Registration for the denomination of origin (DO) for Sateré-Mawé Waraná has come, together with a range of other schemes including Fairtrade, Forest Garden Certification and a Presidia label by Slow Food. These efforts aim to claim market share for *waraná* produced by the Sateré-Mawé and to reshape market relations, bypassing the power of and dependence on large industrial oligopolies. These initiatives have been developed and supported since 1995 through the Integrated Ethno-Development Project (Projeto Integrado de Etnodesenvolvimento, in Portuguese), also known as the Waraná project, that is advancing the economic autonomy of the Sateré-Mawé people.

The process of GI authorization was initiated in collaboration with Slow Food and then received support by the Brazilian government and FAO to further develop the geographical indication system for its official registration. The application for the DO was submitted in 2016 and the official registration was approved in 2020. The Consortium of Sateré-Mawé Producers is the leading institution in the initiative, having developed and now overseeing the social and ecological standards for the label. The protocol for Sateré-Mawé Waraná was collectively defined and embodies traditional practices as well as more current local practices that fulfil social, cultural and ecological functions (CPSM, 2008; Congretel and Pinton, 2020). A major distinction of the practices of the Sateré-Mawé, as compared to other producers, is the regular transplanting of seedlings from the forest, as a form of semi-domestication, and pollination by native bees (Martins and Vasconcellos, 2020; CPSM, 2008). Transplanting from the forest, rather than planting from seeds, is important for the Sateré-Mawé because it maintains their link to the 'mother' vines who transmit their knowledge (Martins and Vasconcellos, 2020).

The differentiation strategy for Sateré-Mawé Waraná has brought relevant partners and market links. The Indigenous producers benefit from niche markets in France and Italy, which purchase 85 percent of their *waraná* production (Loconto, Jimenez and Vandecandelaere,

2018). The distributors are part of the Fairtrade network, giving the producers socially just, high prices, in addition to recognition of their traditions, pride and trust (Loconto, Jimenez and Vandecandelaere, 2018). As well as being traded internationally, *waraná* has been part of the Food Purchase Program (PAA - acronym in Portuguese), which is a public program of the federal government run through the National Supply Company (CONAB - acronym in Portuguese) to encourage local consumption and valorisation of the crop among younger people. The Sateré-Mawé community also sell other agroecological food products on the local market, including honey, cassava, orange, banana, flour, cashew nuts and some native forest herbs.

Companies selling other types of guarana in conventional markets at low prices are perceived by the communities as a threat. Other producers do not follow the same environmental, social and cultural standards as the Sateré-Mawé and they undercut the Indigenous producers with low prices. Indigenous producers find it challenging to adhere to the agroecological protocols, especially as conventional agriculture offers easier access to public credit and subsidies. To ensure continued demand, the Sateré-Mawé must work to identify more relevant markets that value the high quality of such products compared to the conventional types.

## 4.3 OTHER LABELS AND STANDARDS

Other labels and standards adopted by Indigenous Peoples that were not exclusively place-based were identified in this review. The three examples presented in this section were focused on organic production standards, certified through PGS. All of these examples are based in a specific location where the actors and network are closely tied, yet the standards and qualities that they highlight in the products are not necessarily unique to the territory. Clear information



and data on the level of engagement of Indigenous Peoples in the Mexican Network of Tianguis and Organic Markets could not be found in the review. This case was included despite not being led by Indigenous Peoples because it provided many interesting insights towards scaling up and ensuring the long term viability of PGS and some Indigenous Peoples were involved in the network.

### 4.3.1 Mexican Network of Tianguis and Organic Markets, Mexico

- **Indigenous Peoples:** Non-Indigenous and Indigenous (Mazateco, Mam, others)
- **Location:** Mexico
- **Label:** Other (Organic)
- **Certification:** PGS
- **Products:** Vegetables, fruits and meat
- **Stakeholders involved:** Chapingo Autonomous University, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna; El Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR), others
- **Source:** Literature review (Tovar *et al.*, 2005; Nelson *et al.*, 2008, 2010; Gómez *et al.*, 2010; Hochreiter, 2011; Roldán Rueda *et al.*, 2016; Rosina Bara *et al.*, 2017; Kaufmann and Vogl, 2018)

The Mexican Network of Tianguis and Organic Markets (Red Mexicana de Tianguis y Mercados Orgánicos, in Spanish; REDAC) was formed in 2004 to link and strengthen organic farmer markets and street markets that have emerged throughout the country with visions of social, economic and environmental justice (Roldán Rueda *et al.*, 2016). Tianguis are a traditional form of small, mobile market, for which the name derives from the *nahuatl* word meaning “to sell, to swap, exchange” (Rosina Bara *et al.*, 2017, p. 25). Each market in the network is independent with their own specific motivations, while they all involve direct sales of food from local producers and processors to consumers. Organic agriculture in Mexico

has primarily involved smallholder producers, among which the greater part is Indigenous (Gómez *et al.*, 2010). It is these small farmers that the network has engaged, in contrast to the large commercial intensive organic producers, who are mainly located in the north of the country (Tovar *et al.*, 2005).

Participatory guarantee system has been adopted by markets in the network, especially since third-party organic certification remains burdensome and very costly for producers. The underpinning objective of setting up PGS was to bring greater visibility to the local markets and to create and strengthen consumer/producer networks, while fostering a sense of shared identity. The network successfully lobbied for the recognition of PGS through the Organic Products Law that was passed in 2006. Regulations and technical guidelines were subsequently developed for participatory organic certification that came into force nationally in 2015 (Rosina Bara *et al.*, 2017). The participatory certification is recognized within the country but is not yet applicable for international trade. Systems for organization and verification are being developed through independent processes in each market.

For three markets studied by Kaufmann and Vogl (2018) – the Chapingo organic market, the Tlaxcala alternative market and the Pochote Xochimilco alternative market – certification is managed by a participatory certification committee. The process involves an initial farm visit followed by regular monitoring visits, which are primarily conducted by producers with the involvement of other market actors in some cases. Ongoing participation of consumers in the certification process was an aim for all three markets but this has only been achieved to a limited extent due to time and logistical challenges. Every stand in the market has a vote in the general assembly where issues are regularly discussed, and decisions are made through a collective process. Producers engage in different working groups that focus on certification and marketing, they are included in the organization of events in the marketplace, and they engage in other

events outside the markets, such as organic fairs. The model has led to the emergence of many positive spillover effects. For instance, in Tlaxcala, producers have started to manage a common savings fund to establish a common loan system. These activities represent “innovative solidarity practices” that encourage mutual support between producers and are important benefits of PGS participation. Other initiatives include farm visits for consumers. Such visits, combined with workshops and festivities in the marketplace and exchanges between producers and consumers on market days, are important sharing events that foster a reconnection between producers and their customers for a sustained future of the markets.

In Cacahoatan, Hochreiter (2011) found that PGS certified farmers not only derived economic benefits after certification in terms of direct income, but also other positive socio-environmental effects. Participatory certified farmers were often women living in less traditional family settings than those with external certification. They tended to be less affluent, but more diversified in sources of income, production and social commitment. Participatory certified farmers shared a stronger ecological, economic and social orientation towards a vision of organic production. It was found that diversified livelihood strategies of the farmers engaged with PGS supported their resilience and made them less vulnerable to shocks and crises, as compared to externally certified farmers who specialised in coffee exports.

One of the key challenges with PGS in the markets participating in the network has been the time required for the certification process and its reliance on voluntary work, which contributes to low rates of participation (Rosina Bara *et al.*, 2017). Some stakeholders suggested that a system of remuneration may encourage more participation, for which the financing plan may be organised together with universities and NGOs (Kaufmann and Vogl, 2018). This idea was debated as possibly risky, if motivation for remuneration overrides the intrinsic value of wanting to participate in

alternative markets (Kaufmann and Vogl, 2018). Survey respondents in the study by Kaufmann and Vogl (2018) considered the engagement of various stakeholders was critical for the PGS to work. In Tlaxcala, the collaboration with the Chapingo Autonomous University in the certification process was recognized to increase the reliability and legitimacy of the process and was seen as important for improving the PGS in the future.

The role of external facilitators has also been recognized as a means to help mitigate social conflicts that have been occurring in several REDAC markets (Kaufmann and Vogl, 2018). Internal conflicts are one factor, in addition to a lack of consistent funding, that has led to the dissolution of the network (Rosina Bara *et al.*, 2017). An important facet of these conflicts has involved a mismatch of values and motivations for engaging in the certification as compared to the values upheld by the markets. The certification process demands documentation that is burdensome and the guidelines reduce autonomy of the market actors. For example, the Mercado Artesanal y Agroecológico Comida Sana y Cercana in San Cristóbal de las Casas decided to abandon REDAC in 2014 because the guidelines did not enable sufficient flexibility. The market went on to promote “agroecological”, “artisanal”, and “local” products in pursuing a broader platform of engagement (Roldán Rueda *et al.*, 2016). Although REDAC is no longer active, the markets and recognition of participatory organic certification in Mexican law remain. It is now in the hands of each market to develop their certification system within their vision and capacity.

#### 4.3.2 Participatory guarantee system in Meghalaya, India

- **Indigenous Peoples:** Khasi, Pnar
- **Location:** Meghalaya, India
- **Label:** Other (Organic)
- **Certification:** PGS
- **Products:** Vegetables, millets, rice, fruits, wild plants and roots

- **Stakeholders involved:** North East Slow Food and Agrobiodiversity Society (NESFAS); Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty (TIP)
- **Source:** Interview with Janak Preet Singh (NESFAS) and literature review (Jeeva *et al.*, 2006)

In the State of Meghalaya in northeast India, PGS was developed with the support of the North East Slow Food and Agrobiodiversity Society (NESFAS) to bring producers closer together, share knowledge on agroecological practices, and raise awareness among consumers about the value of traditional foods and production systems. The initiative was conceived to promote traditional, chemical-free agriculture in this region that is inhabited primarily by Indigenous Peoples. The Khasi and Pnar are two of the three Indigenous Peoples in the region. They traditionally practice shifting agriculture, terrace production and agroforestry using few external inputs (Jeeva *et al.*, 2006), such that their products can be considered de facto organic.

The standards for the PGS have been aligned with those of the PGS Organic Council of India, which permits the use of its label as a mark of quality. The certification is based on producers' pledge and honour that their production practices do not involve manufactured chemical fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides or hormones. Organic producer groups with five or more producers mutually verify and support each other in upholding the standards. The North East Slow Food and Agrobiodiversity Society has facilitated the formation of 46 organic producer groups, covering more than 230 producers across different districts of Meghalaya. Of the producer groups, 20 have received PGS certificates and the remaining groups are under conversion. Products sold so far under the PGS label are millets and sticky rice.

The overall idea of the PGS was to build up the local food system first before selling to more

distant markets. The facilitating group has organized producer markets where foods are sold by the affiliated groups, and information about them is shared with consumers. Recent food campaigns and awareness raising initiatives, for instance on local millets and wild foods, have attracted consumers. As consumers and farmers have been interacting during many public events such as food fairs, festivals and markets, there is now a better understanding of the value of these products and the work of farmers. In addition to their engagement in marketing foods, the PGS groups also implement development ideas such as school gardens, biodiversity walks, and farmer-to-farmer education and agroecology knowledge exchange. As the initiative is still in its early days, the impacts are yet to be determined. However, there are indications that the PGS has increased incomes of participating producers, with farmers in one village reporting a rise in income of 67 percent.

### 4.3.3 Organic Pasifika, Pacific Island Countries and Territories

- **Indigenous Peoples:** Melanesian, Polynesian, and Micronesian tribes
- **Location:** Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, the Wallis and Futuna Islands, New Caledonia, the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, the Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Niue, Tonga, Fiji
- **Label:** Other (Organic)
- **Certification:** First-party certification and PGS
- **Products:** Nuts, vegetables and fruits
- **Stakeholders involved:** Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), The Pacific Community (SPC)
- **Sources:** Interview with Karen Mapusua (POETCom) complemented by literature review (POETCom, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2020; SPC, 2008)

Organic Pasifika is a certification scheme that has been developed and promoted by the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom) as part of their mission to encourage ethical and organic trade to sustain cultures and communities, improve farmer livelihoods, health and the environment in the Pacific region. The Organic Pasifika label indicates that a product has been generated with organic practices in adherence with the Pacific Organic Standard. This standard was developed through a collaborative regional process to adapt international organic regulations in alignment with local cultures and environments (SPC, 2008). The Pacific Organic Standard takes traditional practices into consideration, adding “Culture & Traditions” as a core principle in addition to “Health”, “Ecology”, “Fairness” and “Care” put forth by IFOAM - Organics International (POETCom, 2020). A primary interest of producers engaging in the scheme is to obtain economic benefits and international market access. The certification was officially launched in 2009.

The guarantee scheme involves group certification through internal control systems for regulated export markets and PGS for local and regional markets. In 2013, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) supported a programme to develop training materials for PGS development, which resulted in the Pacific PGS Toolkit (POETCom *et al.*, 2015). The Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community provides the framework for coordination of the PGS, including production protocols, input approval, registration, labelling and support for PGS development. A seven-step process is required to establish a PGS. The first phase consists of situation analysis during which the stakeholders (consumers, retailers and producers) share their expectations in terms of price, product availability and quality. Thereafter, a document is prepared on how the PGS will work, including training standards and a pledge by all involved that they will adhere to

the standards agreed. In the next phase, the farm is mapped out and production details are recorded. Internal monitoring as well as peer review take place during the production cycle. In the last step, the certification is granted to the producer.

Two approaches are generally applied in setting up a PGS. The first is the commercial approach wherein farmers who are by “default” organic call upon support from a trading company in order to establish a supply chain. The second approach is the project approach, wherein local NGOs develop PGS together with local producers with various aims, for example to develop sustainable livelihoods by linking value chains with conservation of biodiversity. For both approaches, POETCom users set guidelines for the selection of producers for certification, who can be entire island communities, clustered farms or scattered plots that produce a certain product in demand. An already existing producer organization should be involved in the process, as they have capacity to follow post-harvest protocol, which requires: i) an active engagement from the private sector to provide investment in both the market and development initiatives; and ii) a technical expert who can assist in setting the standard for the particular producer community that wishes to apply for PGS.

In terms of outcomes, PGS in the Pacific has enabled steady market growth. In 2019, the area of organic certified totalled 101 514 hectares in ten Pacific countries, of which 8 402 hectares were certified by PGS. More than 2 000 producers were covered by PGS certification in 2019, which had grown from 150 farmers in 2013 and 1 500 farmers in 2016 (POETCom, 2016, 2019). Over 20 certified products had been brought onto the shelf by 2016. To be perceived from this growth is the commitment to a Pacific-wide standard communicating the importance of socio-cultural norms, values and traditions of local food products. The Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community also states that the

motivation to enhance national and regional food security and to reduce the reliance and dependency on food imports has played its part. The PGS stimulated local market development for fruits and vegetables, coffee, *ngali* nuts and lemon grass tea. It has also been the key strategy to enable market access for youth in Vanuatu, Fiji and Samoa, who are part of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Farm to Table project in Fiji, and in Samoa. Secured market access and additional capacity building for producers is envisioned through public-private partnerships.

## 4.4 COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

In the process of researching case studies for this review, Indigenous Peoples' representatives mentioned several initiatives that were not involved in labelling and certification yet were aligned with the rationale of this review. These informants wished to share the ways in which Indigenous Peoples achieve holistic poverty reduction goals through other means of market exchange. This review therefore includes an example of one such alternative marketing approach, through a case study of the Adivasi style market in Odisha, south India, which practices CSA. Community supported agriculture is defined by The International Community Supported Agriculture Network (URGENCI) in the following terms:

*"Local solidarity-based partnerships between farmers and the people they feed are, in essence, a member-farmer cooperative, whoever initiates it and whatever legal form it takes. There is no fixed way of organising these partnerships, it is a framework to inspire communities to work together with their local farmers, provide mutual benefits and reconnect people to the land where their food is grown (URGENCI, n.d.)."*

### 4.4.1 The Adivasi style market in Odisha, India

- **Indigenous People:** Kondh
- **Location:** Odisha, India
- **Label:** None
- **Certification:** None
- **Products:** Mainly vegetables and fruits
- **Stakeholders involved:** Living Farms
- **Source:** Interview with Debyeet Sarangi from Living Farms

The NGO Living Farms has established a CSA initiative that was formed as a collective effort by producers, consumers and hospital professionals. The motivation behind the CSA was to create a different kind of market system that counteracts several issues, including: 1) instability in vegetable pricing; 2) poor connection and lack of awareness of Adivasi production systems and the value of their products; and 3) organic products being viewed as elite products, accessible only through high-end market channels. The CSA aims to address these issues by providing a weekly market wherein producers and consumers interact with one another, and exchange goods based on a price that is decided collectively.

Meetings are held between producers and consumers every three months, and with hospital staff, in order to understand what products are available in a specific season, and to set prices according to the production conditions and challenges producers are facing. For instance, if the supply of a specific product is limited due to an unexpected crop disease or climatic event, the pricing is decided collectively to help producers make up for those losses, as well as to take into account what price level is perceived by consumers as acceptable. Regular exchanges both at the marketplace, in CSA meetings and on the farms themselves, aim to strengthen understanding and appreciation of the production environment and the range of produce available. According to Debyeet Sarangi from Living Farms, many local crop

varieties are sold in the market, and the direct interaction encourages consumers to try out native vegetables that are specific to the area. In turn, this motivates producers to consume these vegetables in their own villages, linking up with the nutrition and diversity focus that Living Farms is pursuing as part of the NGO's vision for food sovereignty. Several of the vegetables are also supplied to the hospital, brought in by more than 200 nurses who are in charge for food supply.

When enquiring about the use of labelling and certification, representatives of the CSA felt that there is currently no need for it thanks to the direct and well-functioning communication between producers and consumers. Localising markets in this way and finding additional spaces for selling and exchanging goods were

perceived as current priorities. Living Farms is generally concerned about the effects of labelling and certification. The organization feels that more support should be given to building human relationships and networks for market exchange at a local level. According to the president of the organization, promoting labelling and certification risks promoting long distance trade without having the adequate production quantity, and risks only including the wealthiest farmers. The organization is also worried about the national government's interest in promoting a state controlled PGS system. Living Farms feels that PGS will be co-opted into a tool for simply commercialising goods in high-end markets without concerns for social inclusion and respect for the commons (land and seeds).



# 05

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This review provided an overview of various motivations and strategies that have led to different certification and labelling initiatives for Indigenous Peoples biocultural products, as well as other marketing strategies. Each case took place in a specific social, economic, political and food system context that influenced the strategy adopted and product selected for commercialisation. The review included initiatives with varying degrees of success concerning income generation and the protection of practices that maintain biodiversity, culture, traditions and values. Although exhaustive scientific data that demonstrates environmental, economic and social benefits in each of the examples was not consistently available, we summarize key indices of success identified from the review in the following sections. Later in the discussion, we reflect on some of the processes that have led to these benefits. We also provide an analysis of lessons learnt in support of successful initiatives and avoiding pitfalls.

### 5.1 BENEFITS DERIVED FROM LABELLING AND CERTIFICATION SCHEMES

#### 5.1.1 Income generation and economic inclusiveness

Not all examples provide evidence of how much

income was generated through the specific schemes. Several have been functioning over a considerable amount of time, which suggests a certain level of economic viability, including the Hua Parakore label in New Zealand (operational since 2012), the Sateré-Mawé Waraná initiative in Brazil (operational since 2010 and now largely self-sustaining) and the Mapuche ethical label (successfully operating since 2010). Perhaps the most convincing example in terms of income generation was the Māori Hua Parakore system as revenue gains of NZD 240 million<sup>7</sup> were forecasted over five years with continued investment in the uptake of the scheme (Carney and Takoko, 2010). Another example with a clear economic benefit was the Last Forest Products initiative in the Nilgiri hills, under which the price for a jar of forest rock honey increased by 40 percent in the span of a single year as the product reached consumers through internet stores and local markets.

Several examples, including the Adivasi style market in Odisha, Mapuche ethical label and PGS in the Mexican Network of Tianguis and Organic Markets, showed how creating strong links between producers, retailers, and

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<sup>7</sup> An exchange rate of 1 USD = 1.265 NZD for 2010 was estimated by extrapolation from average variation of the UN Operational Rate of Exchange between 2011, 2012 and 2013. Using this exchange rate, the estimated revenue gain was equivalent to USD 303.6 million.

consumers allowed them to negotiate prices and thereby challenge price fluctuations and market bias. In the Adivasi style market in Odisha, the efforts have gone as far as negotiating prices on a quarterly basis between producers and consumers. In the Last Forest Products initiative, a form of negotiation of what is being traded is occurring between producers and retail outlets, thereby enabling producers to make profits even during uneven and unpredictable product availability.

A strong example in terms of economic justice (the targeting of specifically lower income groups) was the Adivasi CSA model designed by Living Farms in Odisha, India. This was because the organization specifically targeted the most vulnerable groups in working on the issue of income generation. The Hua Parakore initiative in New Zealand also made an explicit attempt to reach out to Indigenous individuals with less economic capacity. The interviews confirmed that the scheme and its requirements have been tailored in a flexible way so that it benefits the poorest income groups. In other cases, and from the information gathered, it was less clear how income generation was achieved for the lowest income groups and socially most disadvantaged.

### 5.1.2 Environmental benefits

As for economic benefits, conclusive data on the environmental impacts of the initiatives reviewed was limited but many were contributing and aiming toward sustainable production. These were realized through soil and water conservation in the Hua Parakore label example; forest conservation in several examples; and continuity of unique genetic diversity (local goat breed) in the case of the Northern Neuquen creole goat meats GI. All examples promote low input and traditional practices, rather than industrial ones. Two initiatives – the GI for Sateré-Mawé Waraná and the Hua Parakore label – are linked to landscape preservation. The GI for Northern Neuquen creole goat has also linked sustainable land management practices (seasonal grazing patterns) to the quality of the product.

### 5.1.3 Social benefits

A variety of social benefits can be confirmed in most of the examples. These included knowledge sharing through educational activities on biodiversity, cooking, and storytelling (PGS in Meghalaya, REDAC, Sateré-Mawé Waraná GI, and Mapuche ethical label); and solidarity building among different actors, including consumers and retailers (Adivasi style market in Odisha, REDAC, Last Forest Products in the Nilgiri hills, Organic Pasifika, Mapuche ethical label, and Hua Parakore). Women's empowerment was another benefit mentioned in several cases including the Sateré-Mawé Waraná initiative, REDAC, the GI for T'nalak handicraft, and Organic Pasifika. Sharing of management, decision-making processes, and conflict management were other social benefits and features in all the organic PGS examples, as well as Hua Parakore labelling.

### 5.1.4 Cosmogonic and cultural benefits

All described schemes uphold some form of cultural practices, norms and/or values of Indigenous Peoples. Several food products included in the schemes are linked to gastronomic preparations, with the native *waraná* in Brazil being a prime example. Honey and wild foods in the Nilgiri hills are used for important medicinal preparations, dances and other rituals during the food system cycle. In the Pacific Island Countries and Territories, local *ngali* nuts are an important cultural food that is being kept alive with support from the marketing initiative. A unique feature in the Hua Parakore scheme is that it was able to set standards in the local language that encode important cultural values. Preservation and exchange of traditional ecological knowledge are criteria in several schemes, with one unique example being traditional rock honey collection in the Nilgiri hills that is supported through the Last Forest Products label. The T'nalak sacred cloth GI preserves local crafts that otherwise are at risk of being forgotten. The PGS in Meghalaya, India is focused on millets from shifting agriculture, which is a



food generation system tied to cosmogony and spirituality that involves equal division of labour between women and men and intergenerational transmission of knowledge on the entire food system cycle.

## 5.2 LESSONS LEARNED AND PROCESSES FOR SUCCESS

### 5.2.1 Indigenous Peoples' participation and leadership

The initiatives differed with regards to the degrees of ownership felt by Indigenous Peoples and the nature and intensity of involvement of external agents that included NGOs, governments, consumers, researchers and civil society organisations. Similar to observations in other studies on certification for Indigenous Peoples (Champredonde and Muchnik, 2012; Turner, 2016), this review suggests that great value lies in the implementation of market strategies in tight collaboration with, if not under the primary leadership, of local Indigenous Peoples institutions. These institutions can be local governance structures, NGOs or civil society organisations that are aware of the social complexities within their own localities, and that may already have built strategies to embed cash economies in their traditional food systems.

The marketing approaches reviewed often aligned with broader visions towards food sovereignty, land and seed rights. For instance, the example of the GI of Sateré-Mawé Waraná in Brazil can clearly be traced back to the mobilisation of the Integrated Ethno-development Project, which is in place to protect land and seed rights. The Hua Parakore certification, too, stems from a strong social movement for food and seed sovereignty. The Mapuche ethical label was designed and registered as a legal trademark after having created a meaningful reputation in the local area and territory, and with clear motivations for protecting ownership over local

agrobiodiversity and land rights.

The involvement of Indigenous Peoples themselves in defining product standards enables a greater balance of power along the whole value chain and allows greater scope to negotiate sufficient benefits from their production. This is one of the main objectives of FAOs approach for GI that is focused on empowering local communities and producers so they can be leaders of their GI process (Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009). In this context, it was revealed that capacity building, in particular knowledge about market and consumer preferences, is pivotal to enable favourable conditions for the marketing of biocultural products. The effectiveness of strong vigilance of local communities proposed in a review on Indigenous Peoples' participation in forest certification schemes by Collier (2003) can also be confirmed. *Waraná* producers enforce rules to protect against misappropriation by commercial users, which is crucial to the maintenance of ownership, and ultimately economic profit. This strong agency can be linked to the intrinsic values of local communities associated with the main product, *waraná*, and the revalorisation of their territories.

### 5.2.2 Product identification and qualification

This review found that the environmental and social sustainability of marketing schemes can be enhanced by the way in which products are identified and defined for marketing, which aligns with the constructivist view described by Champredonde and Muchnik (2012). In some of the stronger cases, the value of a product was defined in relation to its social and ecological production environment, taking into account an Indigenous Peoples' rights perspective before implementing value addition, involving new processing, cooking techniques, and glamorised packaging. For example, the Sateré-Mawé Waraná GI is linked exclusively to the Indigenous territory and is described as a spiritual and

agroecological product “par excellence”. The Northern Neuquen creole goat meats in Argentina similarly represented a food product tied to community land rights, thereby enabling sustainable grazing patterns.

Nutritional properties, taste, organic production, and aesthetic values are important aspects to attract consumers’ willingness to purchase a product as it connects with some of the values of consumers with higher purchasing power and their willingness to pay beyond the product itself. However, capitalising on these values alone can potentially undermine the importance of territories and the biocultural dimension of products. For example, a critique was expressed in the case of commercialising T’nalak handicraft, as the production of shoes with the cloth was not aligned with the cultural perception of placing the cloth near the feet as an insult. Another critical element was how the project motivated people to move away from shifting cultivation techniques. While this replacement may provide greater immediate cash income, it is not clear whether overall livelihood security (including nutrition and food security) would be enhanced as a result. This reinforces the importance of involving Indigenous Peoples in leading the identification of products, definition of the standard and development of the marketing strategy and narrative. Non-Indigenous consumers may ascribe different values and have different expectations because of their social and cultural identity or status as compared to Indigenous producers, whose values ascribed to a product may be more linked to the production practices, culture, knowledge, and in many cases reactionary attitudes to adverse histories of oppression (Goodman, 2004). Therefore, informing consumers about the Indigenous Peoples’ values behind the products can be an important aspect to attract them to buy branded goods and to potentially pay a premium over similar unbranded products.

Labels and certifications are important intermediaries that help to communicate the

features and values of products and to protect Indigenous Peoples’ rights, in particular their right to self-determination of economic, social, and cultural development as mentioned in The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and their intellectual property rights.

They become particularly relevant in cases where the distance between producers and consumers is longer. They are also important in local markets when influx of non-local and industrial products makes it harder for consumers to differentiate their qualities. This was confirmed in the case of REDAC. It was also a major motivation for the Mapuche ethical label. Aside from labels, bringing producers and consumers closer together can enable a shared understanding of both the creative value and needs of Indigenous Peoples, which a consumer can support by buying the products on a regular basis and at a fair price. This is exemplified in the Adivasi style market in Odisha, India, Mapuche ethical label, REDAC and the PGS case in Meghalaya, India.

### 5.2.3 Niche markets at local, domestic and international levels

An important factor is the identification and liaison with relevant markets and market partners either at local, regional and international level to identify the niche that can value the characteristics of the product/process. Long-distance trade of commodities has led to an increase in income, sustainability, and social justice in some of the cases. This was well exemplified by the Sateré-Mawé Waraná in Brazil. Similarly, the Māori Hua Parakore system has mainly focused on export with significant income benefits. Several cases focused at both local and international levels (Sateré-Mawé Waraná, Hua Parakore, Mapuche ethical label and Organic Pasifika). In these initiatives, the ability to balance out local, regional, and international trade was perceived as an important indicator of success. An interesting aspect of these examples was that they targeted the potential to saturate local

demand before proceeding with long-distance trade.

While export markets are attractive for generating higher cash income for quality products, promising opportunities also exist at local and regional scales. These local and regional markets should be prioritized in an effort to reduce carbon emissions and to protect the environment. In line with these values, several of the reviewed examples were seen to focus exclusively on local markets (Mexican Network of Organic Markets, and the Adivasi style market in Odisha, India). The Sateré-Mawé Waraná initiative in Brazil and the Mexican Network of Tianguis and Organic Markets in Mexico were linked to public procurement systems in order to bring products into midday meal schemes for children and other public institutions. Canteens in universities and hospitals served as reliable buyers in addition to the private customers, for instance in the case of the Adivasi style market in Odisha, India. Local markets have long been promoted as more environmentally sustainable for their low carbon footprints and contribution to local food and nutritional security (Renting *et al.*, 2003; Berti and Mulligan, 2016). Direct producer-consumer relationships occurring during food fairs, festivals, markets, and through dedicated networks create shared values and trust with regards to reputations of quality, thus bringing income for territorial development. In local markets, values beyond monetary ones are exchanged, articulated and created through the direct interaction of people in the territory (consumers and producers); and thereby the Indigenous Peoples' value system becomes strengthened, not only through the act of selling but also through exchange of knowledge and conviviality (Zanasi *et al.*, 2009).

#### 5.2.4 Partnerships for an enabling environment

This review has shown that the involvement of multiple stakeholders in marketing schemes

for Indigenous Peoples is a promising way to enable an integration of technical development expertise with the economic vision of Indigenous Peoples. These stakeholders may include governments, private sector, international organisations, Indigenous Peoples' organisations and researchers of multiple disciplines, including the natural and social sciences. The participation of multiple stakeholders is important to address the complexity of technical requirements, sustainability of production practices and the economic challenges for Indigenous Peoples to sell their products. These actors can contribute to making communities and consumers aware of the wealth and uniqueness of indigenous practices, and how market activities can harmonize with environmental and social sustainability. Technical support and capacity building can help in addressing common challenges faced in fulfilling volume, hygiene and safety standards, as well as keeping production costs low enough to make profits, while at the same time maintaining Indigenous Peoples' values<sup>8</sup>.

The review shows that the role of governments in ensuring successful initiatives can be important. The economic struggle of Indigenous Peoples is not independent from trade and agricultural development policies. Instead, Hua Parakore benefits from an enabling environment thanks to the Treaty of Waitangi that ensures participation of Māori in agricultural and economic decision-making. In Brazil, until recently, the PPA and the National School Feeding Program (PNAE - acronym in Portuguese) have been promoting a connection between family farms (including Indigenous ones) and institutional markets, which helped the promotion of products generated by the Sateré-Mawé. In the case of the GI for Northern Neuen creole goat meats, the recognition of the importance of community

<sup>8</sup> FAO. 2004. *Helping small farmers think about better growing and marketing*. FAO, Rome. [www.fao.org/3/aq996e/aq996e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/aq996e/aq996e.pdf) is an example of training materials.

land rights on behalf of government officials was reported as a crucial element for the project to take off. Also interesting is a recent development for PGS in India, where the national government has recently implemented a law that PGS initiatives must add a second PGS label that certifies the standards set by individual state programs. The opportunities this brings for the original motivation behind PGS (economic equity, consumer-producer solidarity, and re-localisation of food systems) will depend on wider state policies and associated development pathways. India has long protected its national markets over

export (Samberg *et al.*, 2016), but at the same time there is a promotion towards greater productivity and a perceived gap between the interests of small-scale producers and policy makers (Suri, 2006).

### 5.2.5 Summary of enabling and disabling factors for marketing biocultural products by Indigenous Peoples

Table 2 summarizes some of the enabling and disabling factors identified in the review that ensure favourable economic conditions for

**TABLE 2.** Summary of enabling and disabling factors identified in the review

	Enabling factors	Disabling factors
<b>Key actors of the initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initiative is driven forward by Indigenous Peoples.</li> <li>• The scheme is owned by an Indigenous Peoples' organization, and allies support in response to Indigenous Peoples' requests.</li> <li>• The state provides support at different stages, including supporting consumption of products at local level (e.g. through public procurement systems).</li> <li>• An interdisciplinary team of community members and researchers in both the social and natural sciences is involved with support from public policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initiative is driven by external actors and the motivation is framed externally.</li> <li>• The initiative involves some but not all relevant producers and many producers are excluded (especially remote ones).</li> <li>• Ownership lies largely with non-community-based organisations.</li> <li>• Only the better off, or certain social strata in a community reap benefits.</li> <li>• Public Procurement Schemes and state policies promote unfair competition to niche products.</li> </ul>
<b>Motivations behind the initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The motivation integrates the worldviews of the participating Indigenous Peoples.</li> <li>• In addition to sharing indigenous socio-cultural values, other objectives of the community (e.g. political, educational, restoration values) are supported.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The motivation is framed using external values.</li> <li>• The scheme has a strong profit-only focus with no proper assessment of the social, cultural, agroecological and political production environment.</li> </ul>

**TABLE 2.** Summary of enabling and disabling factors identified in the review

	Enabling factors	Disabling factors
<b>Where?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initiative is taking place in the biocultural landscape of the people.</li> <li>• Consumers can learn about and experience the biocultural dimension.</li> <li>• The business brings values back into the territory and the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some long-distance trade, the label/ branding merely serves as an attraction to sell and the values and principles become eroded.</li> </ul>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values are articulated in the verification process (indigenous language, world views and customs), sometimes through creative means that are as close as possible to the Indigenous Peoples' local culture.</li> <li>• The institutional framework that governs and manages the practices associated with the initiative allows for horizontal knowledge flow (between Indigenous Peoples' organizations, the state and other allies).</li> <li>• Capacity building, specialised training in production, marketing and community run businesses</li> <li>• Shared power relations at community and business levels are clearly visible.</li> <li>• Both direct and indirect communication achieves understanding of values by consumers, and their behaviour changes for the benefit of the producers.</li> <li>• There is a flow of values between all stakeholders involved (solidarity networks).</li> <li>• Support for self-determined infrastructure (e.g. territorial markets, outlets).</li> <li>• The local community monitors the benefits and the scheme can be changed easily to adjust for emerging needs and changes and to improve the system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The verification operates through one central body.</li> <li>• Resources and human capital for financial management of the verification process are lacking.</li> <li>• Selection of one single product risks eroding other agrobiodiversity.</li> <li>• Value chains are poorly developed.</li> <li>• There is a lack of interested consumers.</li> <li>• A large gap exists between producer values behind a given product and consumer expectations.</li> <li>• Critical infrastructure is missing.</li> </ul>

# 06

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of the analysis was to better understand the economic, social and environmental benefits that labelling and certification can bring to Indigenous Peoples and to understand the conditions and processes that develop such benefits. Our results show that Indigenous Peoples around the world are engaging in different schemes, which allow them to access niche markets. There was a lack of data in most of the case studies to conclusively demonstrate economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits that labelling and certification schemes offer to Indigenous Peoples. However, some quantitative numbers (income figures, number of Indigenous producers and artisans participating) and a good amount of qualitative information (social and cultural benefits, description of successful processes) could be retrieved by means of conducting interviews and screening grey literature (mainly NGO project documents) and academic papers.

**Nearly all the schemes reviewed had a strong gender focus and aim beyond profit to promote indigenous and traditional food systems.** Hence, the schemes served both as a means to make profit, as well as to reduce other forms of poverty that Indigenous Peoples face (e.g. poor nutrition, food insecurity).

**Unique agrobiodiversity was promoted in all the schemes, both in terms of the**

**products being sold, as well as the wider diversity present in the Indigenous Peoples' food systems.** All the schemes worked on the principles of diversified, low input agriculture.

**It was found that in most cases the motivation to engage in alternative, participatory schemes was the realisation that different forms of market governance are required in order for Indigenous Peoples to make an income while protecting their values.** Dominant market channels (i.e. selling to large agribusiness processors and retailers via third-party intermediaries) are perceived as a challenge because they favour larger business. This challenge also applies to most third-party certification schemes including organic and Fairtrade. In this regard, participatory certification schemes seem to provide a viable alternative, as they are accessible, less costly and can be tailored to the "kindship ethos" that characterises Indigenous Peoples' forms of exchange. Indigenous Peoples in New Zealand and the Pacific find it useful to define quality and sustainability according to their own cultural, indigenous models. The fact that PGS is now also recognized by some governments (e.g. Brazil, India, Mexico) is promising for its institutional strength and to up-scale Indigenous Peoples' product marketing. At the same time, questions remain about whether government interests and economic policies align with those of Indigenous Peoples, and



whether PGS will retain its multifaceted character of creating both profitable value chains as well as consumer-producer networks for shared decision making.

**Geographical indications have also provided an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to set a public and specific standard, together with facilitators, in order to make an income while protecting and promoting their traditions and culture.**

The official recognition made by national authorities can make the process rather long but it provides high recognition of specific quality products from Indigenous Peoples and from their territory. The economic potential of GI appears promising. However, it was also noted in the review that the process around delimitation of a single geographical area, and definition of quality as per Indigenous Peoples' values is not always straight forward. As suggested by previous studies, strong institutional capacity building remains a precondition for any scheme in order to ensure equitable sharing of benefits and prevention of undesired consequences of exclusion, both socially and environmentally.

**Labels, as a form of communication, work well to reach out to consumers over distance if they are clear (not confusing) and credible (trust building).** Their success depends on building a reputation over time and having access to market outlets. Given the large number of different labels on the market and existing barriers to compete with global commodity prices, innovative labels alone may not enable an up-scaling of Indigenous Peoples' product sales. Given these complexities, building relationships and collective processes together with trusted representatives of the private sector, especially relevant market players, as well as governments and researchers in both the social and natural sciences, can be critical in developing sustainable marketing strategies for Indigenous Peoples' food products.

Overall, this review demonstrates that labelling and certification systems offer many potential

benefits for Indigenous Peoples, especially when there are good relationships built with public and private institutions and for those that produce large enough volumes of specialised commodities. With high levels of community leadership and engagement, as well as collaboration, initiatives are more likely to succeed in achieving social, economic and environmental benefits. We highlight that other forms of market innovations such as CSA and territorial markets are also relevant in promoting Indigenous Peoples' products and values, especially at a local level where no labels and standards are necessary. Indeed, this review has only covered a small number of case studies and there are many other marketing strategies being led and developed by Indigenous Peoples that can provide additional insights towards creating favourable economic conditions for an exchange of biocultural products, while protecting and promoting Indigenous Peoples' values. This report aims to contribute to discussion, exchange and awareness raising to enable Indigenous Peoples to continue to be innovators of sustainable markets in favour of biodiversity and nutritional security, while sustaining their livelihoods.

## 6.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Certification and labelling are instruments within a portfolio of several actions needed to provide better economic opportunities for Indigenous Peoples while preserving and revitalising their food systems. This study, while identifying areas of improvement and need for further research, suggests that under the right circumstances these tools can offer important benefits. The following set of policy recommendations are targeted to governments, intergovernmental organisations, Indigenous Peoples and the private sector, respectively. Successful labelling and certification schemes for Indigenous Peoples distinguish themselves from linear value chains in their approach to

communicate and certify the benefits of entire food systems.

Many Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be achieved by promoting while preserving specific quality products originating from Indigenous Peoples' food systems and harnessing the opportunities of institutional and intercultural innovations. For instance, by increasing income from indigenous foods and equally promoting subsistence practices in Indigenous Peoples' food systems, SDG 1 for reducing poverty and SDG 2 to achieve Zero Hunger are addressed. In many cases, women have a leading role in developing standards, aligning with SDG 5. By being inherently tailored to Indigenous Peoples' values and aiming to overcome bureaucratic challenges faced in the current economic system, labelling and certification systems presented in this review also have the potential to address SDG 10 for reducing inequalities. Further, labelling and certification systems allow consumers to make informed choices and can increase the preference for sustainable products, in turn supporting SDG 12 for sustainable production and consumption. Finally, they can, when incorporating a basket of products and valuing Indigenous Peoples' territories, support SDG 15, for halting biodiversity loss and managing forests sustainably.

In respect of the Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination, free, prior and informed consent and their intellectual property rights:

### GOVERNMENTS SHOULD:

- a) Support the right of Indigenous Peoples to determine their economic development and use of resources from their territories, in accordance with UNDRIP.
- b) Recognize and enable development of PGS as a valid means to certify produce from Indigenous Peoples' food systems.
- c) Recognise and enable development of small-scale territorial labels in adequation with production quantity and ensure that it benefits

the poorest income groups and socially most disadvantaged.

- d) Make bureaucratic and administrative processes easier for Indigenous Peoples for GI registration and provide technical support to Indigenous Peoples' communities for the preparation of the specifications (standard).
- e) Support education and capacity building. In this context, support initiatives to foster entrepreneurship and build skills of Indigenous Peoples related to value-chain development, in particular food processing, marketing and agri-food business.
- f) When planning and implementing certification schemes with Indigenous Peoples, make sure the motivation of the initiative represents Indigenous Peoples' values and worldviews, including rights over productive resources.
- g) Institutional arrangements should be defined so that the registration and certification costs are equitably shared between Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders.
- h) Provide financial support to sustain local markets in Indigenous Peoples' food systems and territories, such as territorial markets, CSA and local stores.
- i) Provide support and appropriate regulations for ensuring food safety for traditional products and from small-scale production units (flexibility may be needed in the implementation of some food safety regulations designed for large or industrial production). Link Indigenous Peoples' food products to public food procurement such as school feeding programs.
- j) Support promotional activities, such as national and international fairs, videos and articles in the press to make labels and products from Indigenous Peoples' food systems known.
- k) Fund research and development programmes led by or defined in close

collaboration with Indigenous Peoples to document products from Indigenous Peoples' food systems, their link with climate resilience, nutrition, socio-cultural inclusion and biodiversity conservation, and approaches for sustainable upscaling of their use and commercialization while upholding Indigenous Peoples' values.

**l)** Regulate the financial sector to ensure adequate and accessible financing to start-ups and businesses led by Indigenous Peoples, including those that promote indigenous food ways.

**m)** Promote Indigenous products as part of the national (food) heritage (culture, tourism).

### FAO AND OTHER UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES SHOULD:

**a)** Support research that aims to gather more detailed, field-based knowledge on the benefits of labelling and certification schemes for Indigenous Peoples.

**b)** Facilitate the sharing of knowledge on products from Indigenous Peoples' food systems and Indigenous Peoples' labelling initiatives through the Global-Hub on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems<sup>9</sup> hosted by FAO.

**c)** With regards to b), test the guidelines provided in this document (Annex 1) and implement a medium and long term monitoring approach considering income generation and other benefits.

**d)** Facilitate exchanges of knowledge and expertise between experts and Indigenous Peoples from different countries, especially for sharing processes, best practices and experience on labelling and certification.

**e)** As requested, provide technical assistance to facilitate and maximize benefits from labelling initiatives for Indigenous Peoples.

### RESEARCHERS, EXTENSIONISTS AND PRACTITIONERS SHOULD:

**a)** Identify a network of researchers with diverse backgrounds to conduct a deeper, field-based investigation on the opportunities and risks associated with labelling and certification schemes for Indigenous Peoples.

**b)** Take a facilitation lead in research that aims to empower Indigenous Peoples to design their own marketing schemes and labels, with their full participation.

**c)** Identify, together with Indigenous Peoples, products that can be labelled and certified according to Indigenous Peoples' values and standards.

**d)** When identifying one product for potential GI or under a territorial label, support the definition of an extended territorial strategy to maximize economic, social and environmental benefits by ensuring linkages with all the community products and activities.

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD:

**a)** Take a lead in ensuring self-determination and free, prior and informed consent processes are followed and intellectual property rights of Indigenous Peoples are respected when planning and implementing labelling and certification schemes with Indigenous Peoples.

**b)** Assess and raise awareness among their members of the opportunities and risks associated with different labelling and certification schemes.

**c)** Identify products and geographic regions/ areas that can be labelled and certified according to Indigenous Peoples' values and standards.

**d)** Ensure definition of the marketing and labelling strategies (what products, for what markets, what values and characteristics to preserve and promote, etc.) with full participation of Indigenous Peoples.

<sup>9</sup> [www.fao.org/indigenous-peoples/global-hub/en/](http://www.fao.org/indigenous-peoples/global-hub/en/)

- e) When identifying one product for potential GI, support the definition of an extended territorial strategy to maximize economic, social and environmental benefits by ensuring linkages with all the community products and activities.
- f) Promote and raise consumer awareness for the value of Indigenous Peoples' food systems through labelling and direct communication.
- g) Support contests and workshops for designing labels for Indigenous Peoples' food products.

## THE PRIVATE SECTOR:

### Indigenous adult and youth entrepreneurs should:

- a) Engage in business and marketing development for products from their Indigenous territories in their capacities as producers, processors, traders, retailers and more.
- b) Identify products from their Indigenous territories that can be sustainably marketed, labelled and certified according to their values and standards, in consultation and collaboration with Indigenous Peoples' organisations, researchers, extensionists and practitioners.
- c) Design business plans for developing and marketing products from their Indigenous territories with a fair trade/payment system in alignment with their values.
- d) With regards to c) Seek financing and partnership for realisation of their business plans in consultation and collaboration with Indigenous Peoples' organisations, researchers, extensionists and practitioners, as helpful.
- e) Engage in promotional activities to make labels and products from Indigenous Peoples'

food systems known and to bring consumers and Indigenous producers together to build mutual understanding, such as by social media outreach, product demos in retail outlets, local events, national and international fairs.

- f) Consider e-commerce as a viable means to sell labelled and certified products.

### Processing industry, retailers, restaurant industry and tourism sector should:

- a) Provide market access for Indigenous Peoples' labelled products and define a fair trade/payment system in alignment with Indigenous Peoples' values.
- b) Link products from certified Indigenous Peoples' food systems to local gastronomy and tourism.
- c) Increase flexibility for handling variation in quantity and quality of products and consider providing support for marketing (presentation, packaging, transport...) or lending expertise with regards to labelling and certification schemes for Indigenous Peoples.
- d) Promote and raise awareness of the value (sustainable, biocultural) of Indigenous Peoples' products.
- e) Support and engage in promotional activities to make labels and products from Indigenous Peoples' food systems known and to bring consumers and Indigenous producers together to build mutual understanding, such as by social media outreach, product demos in retail outlets, local events, national and international fairs.

### Financial sector should:

- a) Provide adequate and accessible financing to start-ups and businesses led by Indigenous Peoples, including those that promote indigenous food ways.

# 07

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# Annex 1

## GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNITIES

Based on the results of this review, a set of guiding questions were prepared for Indigenous Peoples and actors working with them, to support their decision-making in establishing and engaging in marketing initiatives that align with their values and objectives. The guidelines consider product selection; definition of standards and guarantee systems; choice of consumers and markets to target; risk assessment of the marketing initiative to the social fabric, culture and environment of the community; and identification of stakeholders and institutions that can support and ensure success of the initiative. The questions are intended to guide a participatory and bottom-up approach to defining a marketing strategy that will be suited to the community and driven by their values.

### 1. PRODUCT SELECTION

Indigenous Peoples' food systems are rich in biodiversity and they maintain many unique products that have important nutritional, cultural, and environmental properties that could be leveraged for income generation following a sustainable marketing approach that also supports the maintenance of the practices, knowledge, and environment from which the products originate. The following questions can guide communities in identifying products for commercialization, noting that multiple products may be selected under a territorial approach.

#### What are the unique products in our food system?

Uniqueness may be tied to:

- Indigenous People's food system
- Traditional methods and recipes
- Taste
- Nutritional qualities
- Resilience or environmental sustainability
- Opportunity for active employment/ engagement of Indigenous Peoples, women and youth
- Unique agrobiodiversity (is it a local variety, species or several varieties?)

#### How is the product tied to the territory?

Is the food system a major characteristic of the landscape (e.g. terraced rice landscapes of Philippines, swidden system, agroforestry, *milpa* or pastoralism?)

#### Is there a potential for GI on certain product(s)?

To be registered and protected as a GI, a link between the product quality/characteristics/ reputation to the origin needs to be demonstrated. The following questions (from FAO, 2012) can help checking such potential:

- Has the product been traditionally produced?



- Is geography commonly used to identify/designate the product?
- Does the final product have unique characteristics that make it impossible to produce it elsewhere with the same specific quality, as a result of its physical and historical development?
- Is the product (as well as the ingredients, the ways and means used to produce it) part of the local culture and/or territorial identity?
- Is there any specific local knowledge involved in the production/processing of the product? Are the processing and/or production practices and knowledge similar in the region?
- For processed products: does the raw material come from the same area where the final product is produced?
- How diverse are natural conditions within the current production area? Do natural conditions give specificity to the raw material?
- Do the genetic resources (of the raw material or process) historically originate in the production area?

### What is the current level of production of this product?

Is this enough for the community and for an external demand? How can we find out?

### Is there any market analysis available which consider past, current and future trends as well as consumers' preferences?

### Is there any food safety issue that could complicate commercialization?

## 2. DEFINITION AND CERTIFICATION OF THE LABEL/STANDARD

Defining and communicating the unique value of products from Indigenous Peoples' food

systems raises their visibility to consumers and potentially also increases their price in the market. Defining the 'standard' of the product means identifying the core principles and values that are followed in its generation and marketing. These may include techniques applied during production, harvesting and preparation, as well as the values that underlie these processes, including the engagement of labour and practices for ensuring sustainable commercialization of the products without compromising the local environment, diets, culture and social relationships in the community. For GI, it is important to explain how these practices are linked to the place and community and to describe the characteristics of the final product. Communicating the 'standard' of the product to the consumer enables them to recognize its unique value and to make an informed purchasing decision that can promote its continued production and supply in alignment with the shared values of producers and consumers.

Certification ensures the credibility of the label and conformity to the associated standard. Some certifications (e.g. organic, Fairtrade, and Fair Wild) have an established consumer base and market channels, which can facilitate the process of bringing a product to market. However, these certifications have defined standards to which the product(s) must comply, and these may not be aligned with the unique standard that the community wishes to apply in their production and sourcing. The accessibility and resources necessary to engage in these certification initiatives must also be considered carefully. On the contrary, a GI or territorial label offers the possibility for Indigenous Peoples to define their own standards and to define their certification system (self-certification, second, third, or PGS) considering the targeted market. The community should reflect on the best strategy for communicating and guaranteeing the standard to consumers, which may include a combined approach of different certifications and labels, as well as direct marketing. The following questions can guide communities in

defining their product standard and deciding on how to communicate and guarantee the standard to consumers.

### What does the label communicate? And how is it reflected into the standard in terms of requirements?

- Produced in the Indigenous Peoples' territory
- Local practices and knowledge used for preparation
- Beliefs, and traditional practices for production and harvesting (including gender aspects)
- Local varieties and traditional practices used in sourcing, saving and exchanging seeds
- Community principles and vision
- Soil, water and biodiversity conservation management practices

### What would be the most appropriate label or strategy?

- Could a geographical indication or brand be defined that communicates the standard?
- How many products could benefit from the label? For a specific quality linked to the origin (see previous question), a GI can apply; if many products are concerned, a territorial label that serves as an umbrella for different product and standards would be appropriate and could be combined.
- Would existing third-party certification schemes (e.g. organic, Fairtrade, Fair Wild, etc.) be appropriate for the product, standard and community?
- Is the community interested in selling mostly directly or are more distant – even export – markets forseen. If selling directly and consumers come to the community or a nearby market, a label may not be necessary, but a PGS, CSA or territorial market strategy may be relevant. For an export market a third-party

certified label may be necessary that should be well protected (GI or trademark).

### How could the conformity to the standard be verified? Would a certification system be applicable to ensure credibility and protection?

- In the case of GI, is the local or national government in charge of the certification and protection?
- Would a PGS approach be applicable or rather a self certification? Or is there a partner in the value chain to play the role of a second party certification? If there is intent to export, third-party certification will likely be required.

### How would you like to communicate to consumers?

- What story would the community like to tell on their label? How can the label represent the common values of the community as well as the diversity of producers and cultures? Are there any local artists that could be involved? What narrative should be communicated through the label?
- What could be other means of communicating with consumers? Through festivals, social media, linking to national campaigns, partnering with other communities, or other means?

## 3. LINKING PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS THROUGH VALUE CHAINS

Marketing the unique products from Indigenous Peoples' territories can involve leveraging and strengthening existing market channels and relationships between producers, consumers and value chain actors. In other cases, it may require establishing new relationships with consumers and value chain actors. The latter may be the case when the unique products or their unique characteristics are not well known or

recognized by consumers. In addition to more distant markets and consumers, opportunities for marketing products at more local scales (including public procurement programmes and local markets) should be considered based on alignment with Indigenous Peoples' values and objectives for the initiative. The following questions can guide a reflection on which markets and consumers would be strategic to target for marketing the products produced in the community.

### Which consumers should we reach with our products?

- Do we have existing market channels we can make use of for marketing the products? Are there tourism opportunities? If not, where can we look to establish relationships with buyers? Who could help us establish business connections?
- How much is our production of this product? What size/type of market could be targeted with current production (e.g. local, domestic, export)? How can we find out?
- Are there any universities/schools/hospitals other public institutions we can involve to promote our local and indigenous food products?
- How could we create a local platform to link producers and consumers, such as a farmer market?
- What infrastructure would we need to upscale production and enhance marketing?
- How can we make this product and its value known to consumers in the desired markets?

## 4. ASSESSING RISKS FROM THE MARKETING INITIATIVE

The commercialisation of products from Indigenous Peoples' territories can affect the local environment, diets, culture and social relationships. The risks should be considered carefully before engaging in specific

marketing initiatives. It is recommended that communities reflect on the following questions to support risk assessment in connection with their marketing initiative.

### Are there risks in this marketing initiative?

- How would commercialising this product affect food security for the community or other livelihood activities? Can we tie in more than one product (basket of products)?
- Are we acting as price makers in the market or value chain of our choice? Is there any risk of dependence from the final market prices, resulting in price-cost squeeze?
- Would commercialising one product risk excluding a similar one (e.g. in the case of varieties of vegetables or grains)?
- Would the initiative benefit women, youth and other groups?
- Would the cultural meaning of the product change if we commercialize it? Would this be a problem for us?
- Is there a risk of using the community image without prior consent by market players?
- How is managed the distribution of incomes along the value chain and in the community? Do we see any risk that only part of the community can benefit from access to these markets, leaving the rest of the community behind?

## 5. INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN THE SCHEME/GOVERNANCE

While a motivated community can achieve much by its own initiative, the support and engagement of other institutions can be critical for achieving the communities' goals. In consideration of the product, the envisaged market, the standard and the potential risks of the market initiative, reflecting on the following question can support the identification of stakeholders that could be called upon to

support the definition and development of the market initiative.

### Who could support and work together with us to ensure success of our marketing initiative?

- What institutions, NGOs or private sector actors should be involved in the scheme? Who is sensitive to our Indigenous values in the relevant government departments? Are there any research institutions that can help us in framing standards in a way that they are tailored to our needs and to our values? Who

could help in bringing the funds required for the initiative?

- Who can help us assess risks and opportunities?
- How do we make sure women, youth and the poorest are included?
- How do we manage the scheme on a regular basis? Who will do this and can we provide a reward (payment) for the co-coordinators/managers?
- Are land and seed rights important conditions for this product to survive?







Certification and labelling are instruments within a portfolio of several actions needed enabling better economic opportunities for Indigenous Peoples while preserving and revitalising their food systems within the overall frame of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Giving priority to initiatives led by Indigenous Peoples, the publication highlight 11 examples of territorial brands or labels, geographical indications, and other types of labels and certifications established to commercialize Indigenous Peoples' biocultural products. The review explores how these marketing strategies

can create favourable economic conditions for the marketing of biocultural products in respect of Indigenous Peoples' values, cultures, and identity. The analysis of the results aims to better understand the economic, social and environmental benefits that labelling and certification can bring to Indigenous Peoples and to understand the conditions and processes that develop such benefits. Finally, the publication provides recommendations to enhance accessibility of these tools to Indigenous Peoples, and guiding questions for those willing to engage in these initiatives.

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