



Governing Bio-Cultural Diversity for Food Sovereignty.

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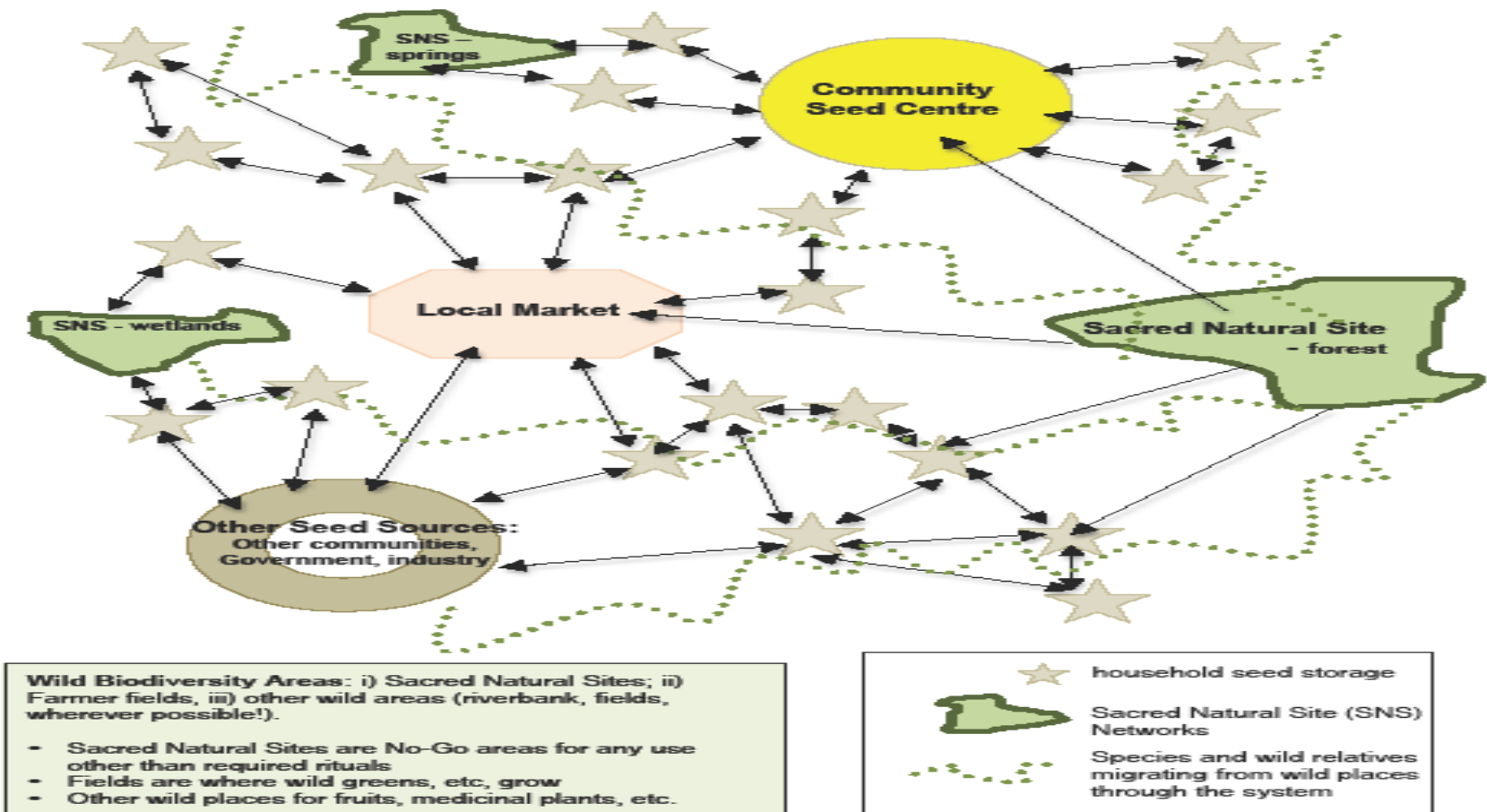
**IUCN World Parks Congress; 12th – 19th
November 2014, Sydney, Australia**

African Biodiversity Network (ABN)

- African Biodiversity Network (ABN) is a network of organizations and individuals working passionately at local, national, regional and international levels to avert social injustices and environmental destruction arising from the contemporary development paradigms in order to enable local communities control their lives and livelihoods while celebrating their social, cultural and ecological diversity.
- ✓ ABN has been working with partner organizations and communities across Africa for the last 12 years pioneering culturally-centred approaches to social and ecological problems in Africa.

Relationship between Bio-cultural Diversity and the Seed Systems food Sovereignty

Community Knowledge and Seed Systems linked up into Networks



Deriving Governance from Understanding of Community Seed Systems

- ✓ Without seed (both animal and plant), there is no food and thus no life. Seed is at the heart of every indigenous peoples and local communities (farmers, fisher folks, pastoralists etc).
- ✓ Community seed permeates all aspects of life among different communities – certain rituals for instance cannot be done without indigenous seeds; for good harvests, healing, peace, community cohesion e.g. seed sharing and other related values.
- ✓ Community seed is sacred and thus its use goes beyond food for eating. It connects people with their land, their culture and carries deep knowledge and traditional practice.

Deriving Governance from Community Seed Systems...

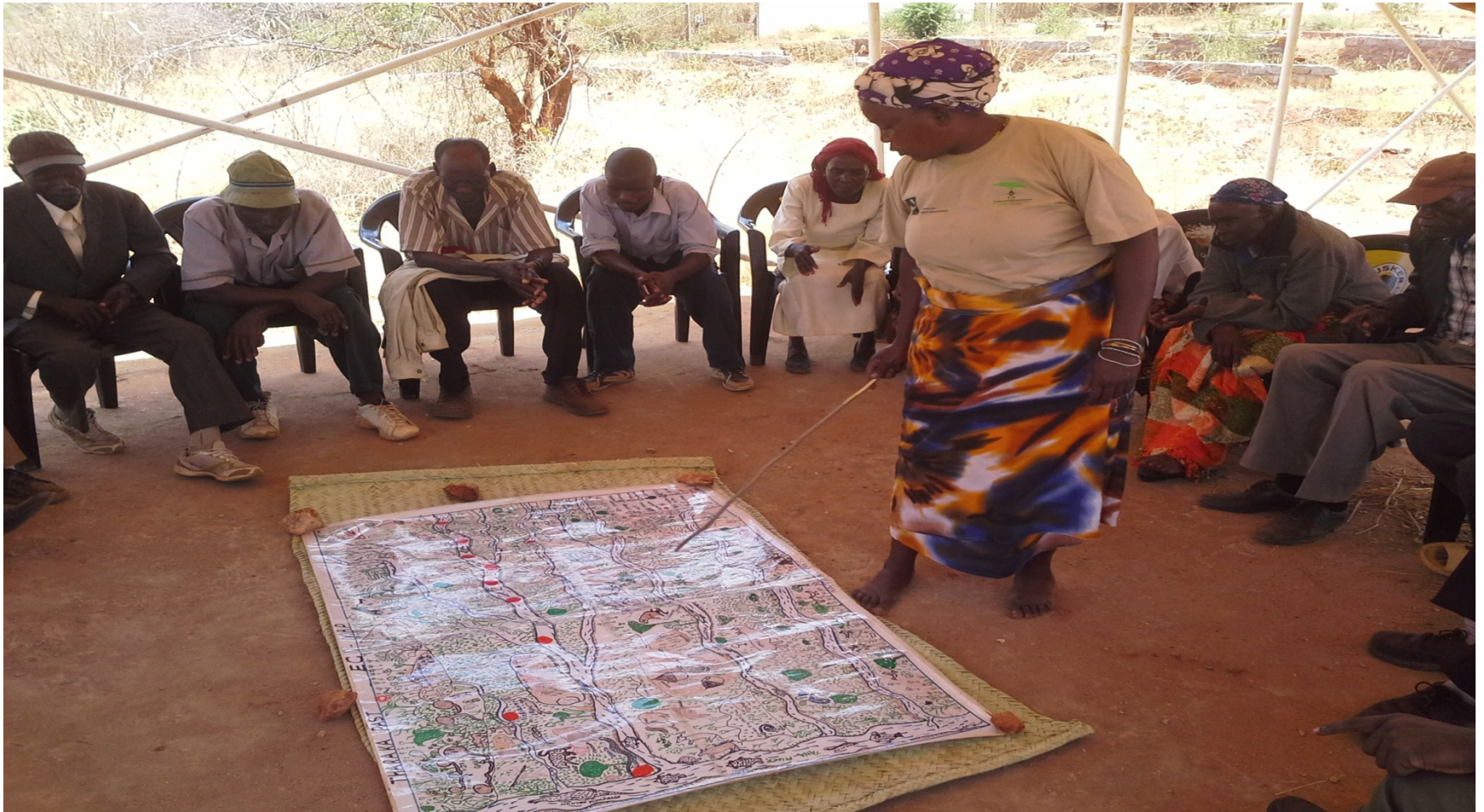
- If community loses their seed, they lose it and all the related knowledge and traditional practices around it. Thus it is important for community to keep their seed.
- Community seed has deep connection with Sacred Natural Sites and wild bio-cultural diversity. Sacred Natural Sites are source of Law (Unwritten Law/Earth Law/Earth Jurisprudence) and the Community Ecological Governance (CEG).
- This relationship underpins community ecological governance and the rationale for reviving customary laws that govern sacred natural sites and territory.

Deriving Governance from Community Seed Systems...

- Understanding of this complex community seed system and network and the community's perspective of the food sovereignty concept is critical in enhancing bio-cultural diversity and the quality and vitality of the community ecological governance.

Community tools for revitalizing bio-cultural diversity and strengthening community ecological governance.

Community Dialogues to analyze their situations



Drawing Eco-cultural Maps and Calendars



Community tools for revitalizing bio-cultural diversity and strengthening governance..

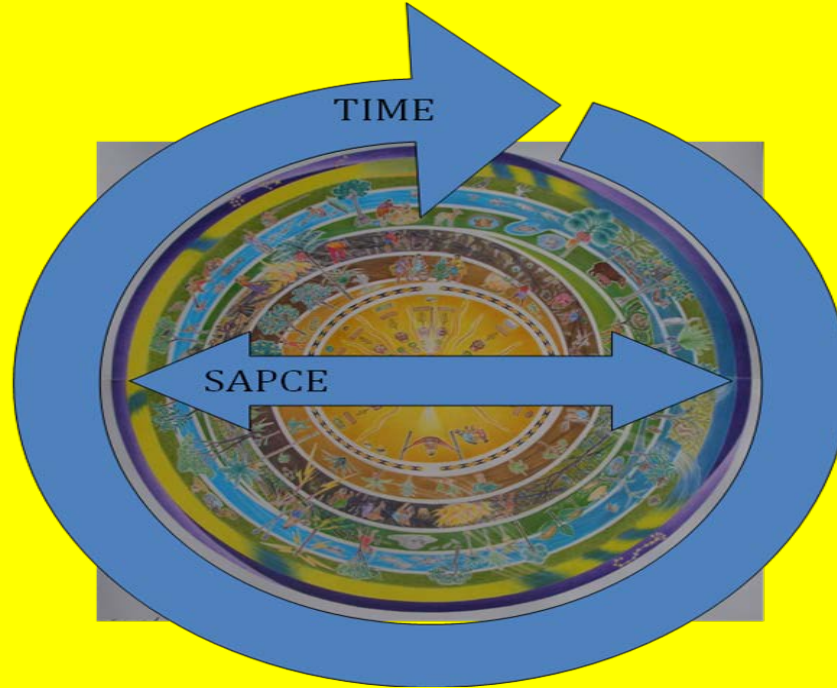
Eco-cultural maps - (past, present and future)



Eco-cultural Calendars (past, present & future)



- Reveal deep geography, cultural vision and meaning of community in relation to biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- Past, present and future are never seen as disconnected or as linear. The 3 maps are constantly communicating with each other. *Past forms the basis to analyze and understand present and what might happen in future.
- When time, space and territories come together they merge into an integral or holistic vision that allows for renewed knowledge to emerge and flourish.



The calendars
are composed by
two variables
which are deeply
interconnected:
Space and Time

Cultural Celebrations (dances, ceremonies.....)



Challenges and lessons learnt to inform the Promise of Sydney 2014.

- **Challenges** – extinction of certain seeds & contamination leading to loss of knowledge and practices.
- Loss of community cohesion and fragmentation making them fragile to cope with external threats e.g. climate...
- **Lessons** - Sacred natural sites and territories (bio-cultural diversity) and the community seed systems/food sovereignty are at the heart of the community integrated livelihoods and quality and vitality of governance.
- SNS are places of cultural, ecological and spiritual importance and should be No-Go-Areas.
- Through this process ILK can synergize science to begin a critical shift to holistic thinking to protect Mother Earth.
- Maps and calendars are powerful tools for building community and biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

Thanks for your attention!



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The photograph shows a woman in a black shirt and white wrap pouring a white liquid from a large gourd into a wooden bowl held by a man in an orange shirt. Another man in a light blue shirt is looking at a smartphone. They are outdoors under a large tree, with other people visible in the background. The text is overlaid in blue on the central part of the image.