

## **Concept Paper**

# **The role of participatory cultural mapping in promoting intercultural dialogue - ‘We are not hyenas’**

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## **Introduction**

Cultural mapping involves the representation of landscapes in two or three dimensions from the perspectives of indigenous and local peoples. It is potentially an important tool<sup>1</sup> for UNESCO in its efforts to help Member States and civil society create platforms for intercultural dialogue, and increase awareness of cultural diversity as a resource for peace building, good governance, fighting poverty, adaptation to climate change and maintaining sustainable management and use of natural resources.

Cultural mapping, if applied wisely, can help to reach the objectives set out in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity<sup>2</sup> (2001) and related recent conventions: the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage<sup>3</sup> (2003) and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions<sup>4</sup> (2005). Cultural mapping is furthermore relevant to the World Heritage Convention<sup>5</sup>, which dates back to 1972, but has undergone major changes since then, expanding the notion of a cultural site and promoting stronger involvement of populations living on the sites.

The aim of this paper is to critically consider how cultural mapping can become a good practice of intercultural dialogue and successfully further the aims of the Universal Declaration and the related conventions. The paper is meant to assist indigenous and local peoples to consider their options and aspirations, to help civil servants and policy makers evaluate how mapping can be a useful tool in cultural policy and inventory work, and for those who are making maps to reflect on their practices.

The title of the paper refers to a moment of intercultural dialogue during a Participatory 3-Dimensional Modelling exercise with the Ogiek indigenous people of Kenya in 2005. Participants from industrialised and agricultural societies were surprised that the Ogiek had very few recognisable footpaths on their cultural map. The Ogiek participants, supported by other hunter-gatherers, pointed out that only hyenas go back on their tracks. Different perspectives on what counts as 'normal' are part of the surprise element in effective intercultural dialogue. What for one group of people is essentially human behaviour, is considered typical of hyenas to other observers. Assumptions about values, perspectives and even topography can be misleading and false.

At the February 2006 UNESCO colloquium on "New Perspectives on Cultural Diversity: the Role of Communities" held in Havana, Cuba, a team of experienced mapping specialists, who have been working with indigenous and local communities, prepared a *Havana Communiqué on Cultural Mapping*.<sup>6</sup> This paper builds on their work.

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<sup>1</sup> Rambaldi emphasises that participatory mapping is about good practices, rather than tools. In this paper, we note that mapping can be a tool for communities within their cultural resource management strategies, and that attention should be given to good practices when these tools are applied.

<sup>2</sup> See: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> See: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php>

<sup>4</sup> See: [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=31038&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=31038&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

<sup>5</sup> See: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.dgroups.org/groups/ppgis/docs/ACFB67.pdf>

The primary emphasis of this report is on the different perceptions that indigenous peoples, particularly in Africa, can have of their situation, needs and choices. However, it can also be relevant for other non-dominant minority voices, such as those of women, youth and migrant peoples across the globe.

### ***What is cultural mapping?***

Cultural mapping, counter-mapping, community-based mapping, participatory mapping – a broad range of cartographic practices have emerged over the last three and a half decades to bring alternative indigenous and local perspectives to the attention of those who hold power and who control what usually appears on official maps. Each initiative had its own motivation and logic.

Early work in cultural mapping focused on demonstrating Inuit land use and occupancy patterns that led to disputes over natural resource rights. More recently, mapping has been used for indigenous defence of biological diversity, resolution of armed conflicts, documenting landscapes of dying languages, and for many other purposes.

These mapping practices are to a large extent a reaction to the type of mapping that emerged during the age of exploration, when maps were produced by European and Asian explorers and seafarers (see [www.maphistory.info](http://www.maphistory.info)) often under the patronage of powerful monarchs and, later, mercantile companies. The colonial character of mapping is seen in the transformation of indigenous and local naming systems into a distorted or fully-replaced naming system that was convenient to the dominant culture. For example, Canadian, Australian, South African and Brazilian place names were distorted or replaced for the convenience of the settlers.

### **Mental maps**

Indigenous peoples have many ways of expressing spatial information and relationships between locations in their territories. Normally, these would be transmitted orally. San communities in the Kalahari still navigate at night using culturally generated mental maps of star constellations. In daylight, San people use numerous other clues to navigate across desert. These include the position of the sun, sand colours and textures, plant varieties and salinity, memories and stories of specific trees, and a naming system for pans (flat indentations which gather water after rains) related to mythology and practical information about their water quality, shape or biological diversity.

Some indigenous peoples have engaged in map-making for centuries if not longer. Derek Elias (2001), among others, has studied the intangible maps of Aboriginal peoples in Australia, who understand their landscapes based on the movement of ancestors and mythical creatures. The maps are related to songs, family territories, and natural and spiritual resources etched on and under the landscape. Symbolic physical maps are created on story boards, sand drawings and body painting. This aspect of maps surfaces in Barbara Glowczewski's work with Warlpiri people (see the UNESCO CD *'Dream Trackers: Yapa art and knowledge of the Australian desert'*).

***“Understanding the heritage of hunter-gatherers”?***

*Warlpiri people met Anna Kassie, a South African †Khomani San elder, in Paris at the UNESCO Colloquium on Indigenous Identities: Oral, Written Expressions and New Technologies (15-18 May 2001).<sup>7</sup> Kassie was shown Warlpiri body painting and story board painting on CD and, without prompting, she recognised them as representing maps of water holes, pathways and spiritual ways without recourse to a mutually intelligible spoken language. As a San elder from a hunter-gatherer heritage, she was able to read and interpret another hunter-gatherer people’s visual representation of their space without any prior knowledge of the other culture.*

**The origins of modern “cultural” mapping**

Indigenous and colonial traditions both clashed and interacted over the last centuries. Lewis (1998) has traced the use of cartography by American First Nations back to at least 1540, when American First Nations worked with Spaniard Hernando de Alarcón to map the lower Colorado River (Malcolm Lewis 1998). However, the main contemporary engagement of Western mapping methodologies with indigenous knowledge systems occurred in work concerning the Arctic.

According to Chapin et al (2005), we can trace the origin of modern ‘cultural’ mapping to the Canadian and Alaskan Arctic from the late 1960s onwards. Geographers and indigenous people found that their interests came together, and cartography was the right medium for expressing tacit knowledge of natural resources and their cultural significance. Geographers and anthropologists, including Milton Freeman, Peter Usher, William Kemp, Lorraine Brooke and Hugh Brody, carried out the early mapping that led to the training of indigenous cartographers and eventually to a strong Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technical capacity in Canadian First Nations communities.

The early work concentrated on how Inuit people understood their land, their relationship with the land, their names for the land, and the presence and movement of wildlife on that land and in the adjacent sea. These maps were typically referred to as Land Use and Occupancy (LOU) (Freeman 1976). The Canadian government took a greater interest in the far North and its vast coastline as it began to seek out sources of natural gas, oil reserves and later hydro-electricity opportunities. In their struggle to assert their aboriginal title, indigenous peoples of the North created partnerships to produce maps that told their version of the land, its resources and their place in the land. Chapin et al (2005) cite the 1976 “The Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project”, managed by Milton Freeman, as one of the foundational experiences of geographers and anthropologists working with Inuit hunters and trappers to map 33 communities in the Northwest Territories of Canada (Chapin et al 2005: 624).

Hugh Brody (1981) took the technical aspects of cartography and knowledge systems, but applied them with an anthropological inclination in his work in British Columbia. Brody’s book, *Maps & Dreams*, recounts his use of mapping methods with

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<sup>7</sup> See: [http://www.unesco.org/culture/indigenous/html\\_eng/report.doc](http://www.unesco.org/culture/indigenous/html_eng/report.doc)

Beaver elders to better understand the story of Treaty 6<sup>8</sup> and disputes of interpretation about how land itself is conceived between the settler state and the indigenous peoples.

Brody worked with the Beaver hunters to show their migratory land and natural resource systems. Brody was concerned to indicate the subtle processes by which hunters determine where to find game and manage the natural resources. In the process, Brody learned that Beaver people have their own mental maps, and that wise and good people even have maps of the routes to other world, maps to heaven.

The Arctic and other Northern Canadian experiences were taken up by Aboriginal peoples in Australia, by Maya in Central America (e.g. Toledo Maya 1977), by indigenous peoples in the Philippines and of the rainforests of Brazil, and eventually began to have an impact around the planet.

Philippino mapping has dealt with issues of Ancestral Domain claims, armed conflict and disputes over administrative boundaries, negotiations over community territories and natural resources rights and protected areas (see Rambaldi et al 2003). Dave de Vera gave a presentation at the 2006 UNESCO Havana colloquium on the 1:5,000 scale model of Mt. Banahaw National Park, Quezon Province, which involved creating a 3-dimensional model of a sacred mountain. After the modelling, elders who could not walk up the real mountain used the model for ritual purposes.<sup>9</sup>

Rambaldi has promoted the use of Participatory 3-Dimensional Modelling particularly in South East Asia and the Pacific. The method and results are summarised in a number of publications and multimedia products. P3DM is designed as a participatory methodology that maximises full community involvement in the mapping exercise, and which can be converted into GIS format after a model has been built and coded. Guidelines on the application of P3DM were published by Rambaldi and CallosaTarr (Rambaldi et al 2002).

Kemp and Brody brought their North American experiences and knowledge to southern Africa in a long-term cooperation with San organizations to help map various parts of the Kalahari, including the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, Etosha National Park and the Okavango Delta area. In 2004, the Trust for Okavango Culture and Development Initiative (ToCADI), in cooperation with Letloa and the Kuru Family of Organisations (KFO), established the first indigenous run GIS mapping centre in Shakawe, Botswana.

Types of mapping in southern Africa have included maps of personal histories and diaspora, maps of fauna and flora, including mapping of wild foods, memory and actual maps of natural resource use and land occupancy, place names, maps of clan boundaries and systems of natural resource management. The maps have been used in land claim cases, helping communities manage their intangible heritage, documenting indigenous heritage and history, negotiating with the State for natural resource rights and recognition of indigenous cultures and economy.

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<sup>8</sup> Treaty 6, signed between 1876 and 1898 in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, affected Plains and Wood Cree. The meaning of the Treaty was disputed by First Nations who argued that they did not cede rights over natural resource use.

<sup>9</sup> For a review of the Mt. Banahaw mapping see [http://www.iapad.org/applications/protected\\_areas/mbnp.htm](http://www.iapad.org/applications/protected_areas/mbnp.htm)

## ***Why is cultural mapping important for UNESCO?***

It is in the application of the 2003 and 2005 UNESCO Conventions on intangible heritage and safeguarding cultural expressions that UNESCO is giving renewed focus to cultural mapping as a possibly valuable tool and practice. Over the last four decades, there has been increasing awareness that some of the most important aspects of human culture are contained in the intangible aspects of cultural practices and knowledge systems. Cultural mapping is one way to transform the intangible and invisible into a medium that can be applied to heritage management, education and intercultural dialogue.

In 1972, UNESCO adopted the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. That act initiated a long process of examining the extent and value of world cultural heritage and expressions. At the outset attention focused on vulnerable physical sites, but over time, UNESCO and its partners showed that the intangible aspects of cultural transmission were an unrecognised yet powerful resource for maintaining peace, providing livelihoods and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the planet.<sup>10</sup>

The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity was adopted in 2001 and officially launched in Johannesburg on the occasion of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The Declaration reflects a number of shifts in thinking about culture, cultural diversity and its links to fighting poverty and sustaining the environment. The presentation of the Universal Declaration at the WSSD strengthened awareness of the important link between cultural diversity and biological diversity.<sup>11</sup>

The three “Rio Conventions” from 1992 – on Biological Diversity (CBD), combating desertification (CCD) and the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) – all recognise the link between sustainability and increasing the involvement of local and indigenous communities. It is now acknowledged that cultural systems, practices that favour natural resource management, value systems and knowledge systems of indigenous and local peoples are critical in shifting dangerous patterns in over-consumption of natural resources, in combating pollution and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

UNESCO’s efforts help highlight that indigenous economies and cultures emerged in narrow ecological niches, that the threats to cultural and biological diversity are interrelated and also threaten the survival of the planet. The UN instruments recognise that local communities can be more rational and effective managers of natural resources than decision makers in remote urban centres or global market players.

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<sup>10</sup> See also Perez de Cuellar’s report of the World Commission on Culture and Development called “Our Creative Diversity”.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion on the linkage between language diversity and biological diversity, see Nettle & Romaine 2000; see also the report of the round table on cultural diversity, biological diversity and sustainable development: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001322/132262e.pdf>

*Article 4* of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity explicitly acknowledges the protection of the human rights of indigenous peoples. This is then followed up by a commitment in point 14 of the Plan of Action:

Respecting and protecting traditional knowledge, in particular that of indigenous peoples; recognizing the contribution of traditional knowledge, particularly with regard to environmental protection and the management of natural resources, and fostering synergies between modern science and local knowledge.<sup>12</sup>

The CBD and the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity are mutually reinforcing on the important role of indigenous peoples as major stakeholders in protecting the world's cultural and biological diversity.

Following the WSSD, the UNESCO General Conference approved two related normative instruments that flow from the Principles and Action Plan of the Universal Declaration: the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

### **Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)**

This Convention has substantial implications for indigenous peoples around the planet in that it takes into account their practices, landscapes and cultural heritage from their own perspective, and emphasises their role in managing cultural and natural resources.

One of the challenges faced by hunter-gatherer peoples and nomadic pastoralists, in particular, is that their cultures seem to be invisible, intangible and anchored in the natural world in contrast with agricultural or industrial societies, which use their wealth and power to transform landscapes, create a built environment, including sometimes great edifices and monuments.

Cultures that built temporary abodes with grass, twigs or mud, and whose primary cultural landscape was intangibly anchored in natural landscapes (e.g. ancestors associated with terrestrial formations, animal totems, trees that carried family memories, clan boundaries represented by natural features), were invisible to the dominant cultures. For much of the twentieth century attention was focussed on the built environment of dominant cultures. The idea that intangible culture might be both valuable and threatened represents a major shift in international debate.

*Article 12* requires signatory states to create inventories of intangible heritage and to monitor them. The Havana workshop in 2006, where mapping was discussed in greater detail, also highlighted the question of inventories. Although some indigenous peoples may be concerned about the State's involvement in creating lists and inventories of what counts as intangible heritage, the exercise also creates an opportunity: to negotiate not only greater recognition of oral cultures and intangible heritage, but also to explain the close relationship existing between different cultural

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<sup>12</sup> See: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf>

heritages and the territory and natural resource contexts in which cultural heritages arise and survive.<sup>13</sup>

*Article 14* requires the signatory state to promote recognition and respect for intangible heritage in the public domain (through awareness raising, education and training) and to pay attention to non-formal transmission of knowledge. For indigenous peoples, this is another chance to gain visibility in national policy forums and to argue for policy frameworks and governance mechanisms that help sustain indigenous economies along with the transmission of indigenous knowledge and culture. Maps allow indigenous cultures to express themselves in their full territorial context. Cultural participatory mapping, in particular, can strengthen the ability of communities to manage their cultural heritage and knowledge, while also encouraging respect and understanding from dominant groups.

### **Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)**

This Convention covers a number of elements and its original purpose was somewhat transformed in the last stages of adoption. On the one hand, it is an instrument of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity that promotes awareness and respect for cultural diversity. On the other, the Convention aims to deal with cultural industries and the right of states to protect their interests in the global market place.

At the outset, the Convention's stated objectives were:

- to encourage dialogue among cultures with a view to ensuring wider and balanced cultural exchanges in the world in favour of intercultural respect and a culture of peace;
- to foster interculturality<sup>14</sup> in order to develop cultural interaction in the spirit of building bridges among peoples; and
- to promote respect for the diversity of cultural expressions and raise awareness of its value at the local, national and international levels.

*Article 13* mentions specifically the desirability of integrating culture in sustainable development:

“Parties shall endeavour to integrate culture in their development policies at all levels for the creation of conditions conducive to sustainable development and, within this framework, foster aspects relating to the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions.”

The 2005 Convention then goes on to look at the protection and promotion of cultural industries and ways of reducing mono-cultural dominance in the film industry, performing arts and other cultural commodities.

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<sup>13</sup> Good practices and ethics are going to be discussed later in the paper.

<sup>14</sup> “Interculturality” refers to the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect.



It is clear that the 2005 Convention requires governments to consider cultural, economic (development) and environmental policy as a single package, with cross-cutting issues. This is a major policy advance. One of the deep frustrations experienced by indigenous peoples in Africa is that the State may appreciate the cultural expressions of indigenous peoples (their traditional dress, music, clothing, bead work) but not take into account how displacement, forced removals, poor health services, deforestation and other results of poor environmental management may adversely affect the sustainability of indigenous cultures. Now, however, African and other states are starting to think about knowledge and culture as national resources that need policy frameworks, reflection and dialogue.

## ***Cultural mapping in UNESCO***

Different types of mapping have played a role in World Heritage Site identification and management since the time of the 1972 World Heritage Convention. However, within the framework of the UN's First International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, UNESCO articulated a specific programme of cultural mapping with indigenous peoples. With the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and the related conventions there has been increased interest in understanding and promoting cultural mapping as a medium to support the work of the Conventions and advance the spirit of the Universal Declaration.

The coordination of cultural mapping inside UNESCO has been led by the Division for Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue in the Culture sector, which was already a key player in the First UN International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Other divisions and sectors have also dealt with maps as part of their initiatives on behalf of indigenous and local knowledge systems. A summary of selected UNESCO materials and workshops on cultural mapping is given in Appendix 1.

On 15-16 November 2006, the Division for Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue organized a workshop in Paris to help UNESCO staff and Francophone indigenous trainees to think critically about using cultural mapping to foster intercultural dialogue and development. The group focused particularly on the methodology of Participatory 3-Dimensional Modelling (P3DM) promoted by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (CTA), an EU-backed institution that assists in "formulating and implementing policies and programmes to reduce poverty, promote sustainable food security, preserve the natural resource base and thus contribute to building self-reliance in ACP (African, Caribbean, Pacific) rural and agricultural development."

### **Main lessons learned**

The main lessons shared at the Paris workshop included:

- Cultural and participatory mapping arise from different origins:<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Cultural mapping involves a community identifying and documenting local cultural resources. According to Crawhall and Rambaldi, there is a general consensus in mapping literature that the application started in the Canadian Arctic.

combining them helps to strengthen indigenous and local peoples' capacities to express and defend their points of view, cultural practices, rights and aspirations, especially in the current context of globalisation where their ways of living are under threat;

- The making of the map legend (i.e. the key to reading the map) for cultural participatory maps provides an opportunity for successful intercultural dialogue and the valorising of indigenous and local voices;
- Cultural and participatory mapping are valuable tools for the management of protected areas, notably World Heritage Sites; good mapping practice creates the conditions for better understanding and negotiation between local and indigenous communities and third parties;
- Mapping as such does not ensure the full understanding and/or consent of local and indigenous communities. What counts are the approach, the process, and good practice (including obtaining prior informed consent to implement the mapping exercise);
- Cultural and participatory mapping can ensure free, fair and informed consent on projects involving the territories of indigenous and local peoples;
- Cultural and participatory mapping are unique tools for making intangible heritage visible in its territorial and resource context;
- While considering or conducting mapping exercises, attention must be paid to issues of ethics, the safety of communities and the protection of intellectual property rights; and
- The issue of gender and women's voices in mapping exercises needs to be addressed and monitored.

The Paris workshop has generated several materials, including this paper, a Facilitation Guide and a French-language summary of the workshop and outputs. These will be available on the UNESCO website.

### ***Is cultural mapping effective in developing intercultural dialogue?***

In this paper, we have explored what is meant by 'cultural mapping'. We are asking whether cultural mapping can be considered a good practice in intercultural dialogue, even if the term means different things to different people. South Africans, for example, are acutely aware of how abusive intercultural relations can be and how difficult it is for dominant groups to listen, understand and appreciate the perspectives and cultural systems of subordinated peoples. Intercultural relations vary a great deal from one country to another. Africans generally pride themselves on their tolerance for diversity, yet even in the relationship between dominant agricultural peoples and subordinated hunter-gatherers or nomadic pastoralists, there is room for misunderstanding and sometimes conflict.

Maps are an ideal tool for elucidating information about landscapes, sites and territories from the perspective of local and indigenous peoples. However, we need to consider whether intercultural dialogue presumes a *structural* relationship that permits transformation. There may be power inequalities that make it difficult for some participants to become engaged and to listen. There may also be unresolved

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Participatory mapping, on the other hand, emerged from Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methodology, which spread widely in the development community in the 1980s.

issues about who mediates in intercultural dialogues; and there are certain risks posed by mapping.

### **Making the intangible tangible**

The legend and the map certainly help to make the invisible and intangible heritage of indigenous peoples visible to dominant groups. Yet, there still remains the question of power and the ability to transform negotiation into intercultural dialogue that will lead to shared perspectives, comprehension, tolerance and new types of relationships.

From its inception, cultural mapping has been understood to act as a bridge between subordinated or marginalised voices and those in a dominant position, usually those who have the power to make certain types of decisions, whether it be the State, influential ethnic groups or the private sector. Cultural mapping is the exercise of representing a previously unrepresented world view or knowledge system in a tangible and understandable geo-referenced medium.

There are challenges in achieving genuine intercultural dialogue through the mapping medium. A core problem is the gap that exists between the conceptual systems of indigenous peoples and those of the dominant culture. Indigenous peoples know their lands, know who they are and what they believe, but where there are grossly distorted power relations and a legacy of rights violations, it may be difficult for indigenous people to express this to the dominant actors in a manner that they can hear and understand. The representatives from the dominant culture may not easily recognise knowledge, good judgement or wisdom when expressed by indigenous and local peoples. Rambaldi factors into his mapping exercises an opportunity for the dominant group to predict the reliability of what they will be seeing on the 3-dimensional models. He cites an experience from one country where the government officials who participated in the work initially had little confidence in the ability of peasants to provide accurate information on the biological diversity of a national park. By the end of the workshop, those same officials were convinced of the peasants' capability, even though the officials were still operating within a biased bureaucratic system (Rambaldi et al 2003).

### **Mapping as a communication bridge**

Mapping makes it possible to create a special kind of communication bridge. The format itself provides a medium that usually both parties can feel confident about, understand and explore together. For example, when conducting negotiations with a National Park authority, it is easier to look at and talk about a map than follow an oral discourse on the role of ancestors or creation myths in forming the landscape. Though mapping may not guarantee successful intercultural dialogue, it is probably one of the most effective media for creating a platform and opportunity when dealing with a bureaucracy and or hegemonic cultural interlocutor.

In a non-bureaucratic environment, maps also help to reveal hidden assumptions and cultural constructs about territory and natural resources. In a workshop with the African Biodiversity Network in Cape Town in 2005, various activists from Europe, Africa and Latin America participated in orientation training on cultural mapping. In

one of the exercises, the participants produced their own map of where food came from in their childhood. A remarkable feature was that despite other differences, agricultural Africans and Europeans produced quite similar maps. The built environment was home, with gender-allocated spaces, and the forest was 'The Other', a place outside civilisation. When we asked more about this, both Europeans and Africans recounted stories showing the forest contained spirits, ghosts or witches – threats to the sedentary community. Having previously mapped with San people and worked with indigenous peoples in Central Africa, we were aware that hunter-gatherers do not see the forest or wilderness as 'other'; for them 'other' is rather the context in which humans occur. For instance, in N|u, a southern San language, there is no separate word for nature because there is no opposition between the human and the natural worlds.

In Kenya once, while working with the formerly hunter-gatherer Ogiek people, the concept of pathways was discussed. The Ogiek distinguish between their own pathways, *wakta*, and the wide paths used by agricultural peoples or outsiders, generally called *waktawo*. In the Ogiek view, threats come from the outside and hunter-gatherers should move more quietly in the forest on more subtle pathways. This in itself showed a sharp contrast in perceptions about space. However, a deeper lesson was yet to surface.

When the Nessuit 3-dimensional map was finished, there were animal tracks, *irongiit*, and paths of strangers' *waktawo*, but almost no *wakta*, indigenous footpaths. When queried by the trainees, the Ogiek elders were surprised by the question. Their answer, paraphrased in the title of this paper, was: '*Only a hyena goes back on its path*'. As hunter-gatherers, they saw no logic in following the same path in two directions. First, you knew what was on a path you had crossed because you had analysed the movements of other animals, and second, as part of the system, you too were scouting for new resources and not setting yourself up to be trapped. All of the hunter-gatherers present had the same reaction. They even had the same sayings, whether they came from Botswana, Tanzania or other parts of Kenya. Only hyenas and jackals retrace their pathways, a sign of sloth and opportunism.

### **A matter of different perceptions**

This is an example of how hunter-gatherers and agricultural peoples have quite divergent assumptions about what is *normal* cultural behaviour. Moreover, the difference is not a difference rooted in origins. The agricultural Europeans and Africans had more in common with each other than either had with the hunter-gatherer peoples. The Botswana San and Kenyan Ogiek could relate more easily to each other on this theme than to the agricultural peoples present within their territory.

The Ogiek model was the space in which the intercultural dialogue occurred, but the model was not sufficient to tell the story by itself. As Rambaldi has emphasised, the heart of the mapping exercise is creating the legend for reading the map (Rambaldi 2004, Rambaldi et al 2007). It is the legend that renders coherent and visible the culturally specific system of understanding spaces and relationships. As more work is done with African hunter-gatherers, it is emerging that they primarily use culturally

encoded *natural* features to navigate their landscapes, whereas farmers and urban societies tend to navigate according to man-made modifications of the landscape.

In development discourse on Africa, it is commonly said that hunting and gathering is *not* an economic activity, the lands of hunting peoples are not owned by anyone, and do not have a '*mise en valeur*', a value created by 'usage', i.e. by the manual transformation of the land, which often results in the destruction of biodiversity. In 'globalist' discourse, the fight against poverty is premised on models of capital and growth, creating wealth through labour and the management of capital resources (for example, see de Soto 2000).

At the heart of the conflict between indigenous hunter-gatherers and dominant agricultural societies are different perceptions of the relationship between man and nature, the unnamed prejudices about production and reproduction, and power issues. Such differences are exacerbated by globalist economic theories and policies that only see nature within a commodity and ownership framework. We are reminded of Gramscian theories of culture and the notion of *hegemony*. The work of intercultural dialogue is the work of making hegemonic relations explicit, and showing that there are multiple voices and paradigms for natural resource use and that sustainability rests not only on cultural diversity, but also on economic diversity and on policies of economic pluralism.

This hegemony in policy makes it difficult to express different economic models that are grounded in different cultural norms about natural resources. Indigenous models that emphasise equilibrium, sustainability, mobility and collective responsibility are not easily accommodated by finance ministries that depart from models based on the submission of natural resources to growth and consumptive models.

It is one thing to create dialogue; it is another to transform power relationships. For activists, the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity creates opportunities not just to publish more maps from different cultural perspectives, but to negotiate changes in power relationships between holders of different knowledge, cultural systems and economic power in a manner that is sustainable for all life on earth, as well as for ensuring peaceful co-existence and good governance.

### ***Revitalising culture and the intergenerational transmission of knowledge***

Intercultural dialogue is often referred to as interaction between different ethnic and cultural groups having differential power relations. However, in a rapidly changing world, there can also be major shifts in knowledge and experience between generations. Some indigenous peoples may experience a form of intercultural dialogue within their communities, between elders and youth, or between men and women. The ability of indigenous peoples to recognise and manage their own knowledge systems is, arguably, a prerequisite to intercultural dialogue. Without this capacity, even mapping risks becoming an extractive exercise. This point is emphasised by two practitioners from Quebec:

"The most important lesson learned from the Nunavik [Quebec] experience is that the indigenous peoples must first and foremost control their own information. It has also

become clear over the years that the knowledge base of indigenous peoples is vital, dynamic and evolving. Merely “collecting” and “documenting” indigenous environmental knowledge is in fact counter productive. These knowledge systems have been under serious attack for centuries and the social systems that support them have been seriously undermined. ... It is not a question of recovery and recording indigenous knowledge, it is one of respect and revitalisation.” (Brooke & Kemp 1995: 27).

As Kemp, Brooke and other authors have pointed out, the problem for indigenous peoples is two-fold: 1) they experience cultural assaults that cause their intergenerational transmission of knowledge and culture to weaken or sometimes collapse, and 2) even when a wealth of knowledge exists, it is not easy to communicate this to decision-makers or to bring orally-based knowledge effectively into negotiations, disputes, courts or governance mechanisms.

Mapping, both the process and the product, serve as opportunities for cultural revitalisation and intergenerational transmission of knowledge. Rachel Olson, a First Nations activist and geographer, explained at the Paris 2006 workshop that GIS (geographic information system) has become an essential tool for aboriginal Canadians in managing their lands and their relationship with the State and private sector. No longer are they vulnerable to data manipulation and possible disputes of interpretation. Their ancestors understood the treaty-making process differently than the white settlers primarily because First Nations emphasised honouring one’s verbal promises, the respect for host and guest, and the inalienability of their territories. Europeans used their written languages to manipulate the agreements in their favour over time. Now, GIS and maps create a new language that the State cannot dominate, and there is a new technical literacy that is more visual and not the unique domain of the dominant culture.

In the case of San communities and the Ogiek hunter-gatherers, mapping is serving to revitalise and stitch together a new language shared by older and younger indigenous people. Many young San and most Ogiek no longer hunt or gather wild food, and their exposure to traditional practices, skill and competencies is declining rapidly. Yet, they live in a unique and richly endowed cultural system that could strengthen their understanding of biological diversity and the value system developed by their ancestors for the sustainable use and respect for natural resources. Mapping (both the process and the result) thus becomes a means to reinvigorate intergenerational and inter-gender dialogue, and – most importantly – a way to bring tacit knowledge to the surface that may not have been taught or even verbally expressed before.

Not all indigenous peoples may need to revitalise their knowledge, skills and practices. At a workshop held in Helsinki in 2006, Saami youth emphasised that they do not map the boreal forests; rather they move across the land with their elders learning the meanings and signs firsthand (Crawhall 2006). A vibrant cultural system does not require maps in that sense. Yet, as Olson demonstrated at the Paris workshop, not making or working with maps reduces the literacy and technical capacity of indigenous people to protect their lands and be partners in governance.

In the Ogiek case, it was interesting to note that the elders, who are involved in a number of litigation cases to try to hold onto their lands, chose to apply the P3DM

method of mapping specifically to help their young people better understand and hear the elders. The mapping dealt with a geographical context that was still accurate, but a forest and cultural system that had started to change seventy years earlier and was radically destroyed during the last ten years.

### ***The role of the State: opportunities for new partnerships***

Through the regional dialogue facilitated by the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC), it has become clear that most African indigenous peoples would like greater engagement with the State over issues of recognition, education, protection for threatened languages and cultures, improved sustainable livelihoods, land management and local governance.

African states have also shown enthusiasm for the 2003 and 2005 UNESCO Conventions. Africa is particularly rich in cultural and linguistic diversity. As the understanding of the value of cultural diversity in sustaining biological diversity increases, there is an interesting opportunity for indigenous and local peoples to redefine their relationship with the State. Experiences of historic marginalisation, rooted in colonialism, can be transformed into new relationships of mutual cooperation, using cultural knowledge systems and practices to help protect and manage Africa's vulnerable natural resources.

Mapping of cultural heritage and diversity is likely to become a significant space where indigenous peoples and the State come to know each other and redefine their relationships. There is a burst of activity in mapping Africa's forests and natural resources, and a growing interest in mapping cultural landscapes that interact with those natural resources. This is demonstrated by the Shakawe San mapping centre, and also by new mapping initiatives with indigenous peoples in Central Africa and Kenya. The African Biodiversity Network (ABN) has entered a dialogue and is sharing information with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), ERMIS Africa (Environmental Research Mapping and Information Systems) and IPACC (Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee) to bring the practice of mapping to rural communities across the continent.

The 2003 Convention provides an opportunity for indigenous peoples and the State to interact on identifying and building a national inventory of intangible heritage. Both this one and the 2005 UNESCO Convention permit an active role for civil society. As indigenous peoples become more skilled in GIS and other technical competencies, they can help guide the State in how to conduct inventories and manage the country's intangible heritage. The Belize case study presented in Havana offers a useful illustration of how intangible heritage policy issues are strengthening the involvement of indigenous peoples in governance.

### ***Conclusion***

It will be important for UNESCO and other multilateral bodies to promote best practices in cultural mapping and encourage Member States to see the value of working in close collaboration with indigenous/local communities and civil society in this area. The Havana 2006 workshop emphasised that top-down approaches by the State fail as the people themselves have to be the ones interpreting and managing

intangible heritage. The governments of Mexico, Cuba and Bolivia, for example, are engaging qualified anthropologists to work in a more participatory manner with local and indigenous communities. The Havana working group on cultural mapping, which included UNESCO staff, Rambaldi, De Vear, Kemp and Crawhall, released a summary outlining the opportunities and risks associated with cultural mapping, entitled *Havana Communiqué on Cultural Mapping*.

The 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage has existed for more than 30 years, and yet many African World Heritage Sites remain at risk. Some of those World Heritage Sites were restored and are now being managed without adequately involving and respecting local and indigenous peoples' participation, rights and intangible heritage. The lessons are clear – public participation is central to good governance, and even more so for sustaining cultural heritage and cultural diversity. Good intentions are not enough; attention must be given to implementation and there has to be a willingness to learn from experiences, both good and bad.

Sustaining the world's cultural diversity will come from new types of partnerships between the State and civil society, new partnerships in technology between rich and poor, urban and rural peoples, and a commitment by all to sustainability. Mapping is potentially an important practice where the mutual interests of dominant and the subordinated voices can both be expressed and recognised. Maps and the process of participatory cultural mapping can generate good practices of intercultural dialogue.



## Appendix 1

### Selected UNESCO materials and workshops related to cultural mapping

#### ***UNESCO-commissioned papers related to cultural mapping***

As part of its actions in favour of indigenous peoples, UNESCO's Division of Cultural Policy and Intercultural Dialogue has commissioned the following reports on cultural mapping:

**Crawhall, Nigel** (2001) *Written in the Sand: Auditing and Managing Cultural Resources with Displaced Indigenous Peoples: A South African Case Study*. UNESCO and South African San Institute: Cape Town.

**Crawhall, Nigel** (2002) *Giving New Voice to Endangered Cultures*. Working paper prepared for the International Forum on Local Cultural Expressions and Communication, UNESCO. The paper provides a sound introduction to the issue of cultural mapping, highlighting key questions and concepts.

**Poole, Peter** (2003) *Cultural Mapping and Indigenous Peoples*. This report focuses on cultural mapping, its origins and its purposes, with examples drawn from around the world. It also discusses economic, social and cultural rights for indigenous peoples and concludes with a summary of the situation of Pygmy peoples and their use of cultural mapping in addressing problems of cultural security.

#### ***UNESCO workshops***

Several workshops have been conducted that deal with mapping; these include:

**Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic:** "An International Forum on Local Cultural Expression and Communication". This was organized by UNESCO and held in Santo Domingo on 3-6 November 2003. It addressed such issues as safeguarding endangered cultures through communication, producing local content as an expression of cultural diversity, and promoting communication policies with an emphasis on cultural diversity, freedom of expression and local content. A paper on mapping was commissioned and discussed.

URL: <http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php->

[URL\\_ID=14210&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=14210&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

**Bangkok, Thailand:** "Putting Cultural Diversity into Practice: Some Innovative Tools". Training for Asia Pacific Field Personnel. 15 – 19 December 2004. The Bangkok workshop was an in-house orientation on cultural mapping for regional staff. An annotated bibliography can be consulted at: <http://www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=2633>

**Lahore, Pakistan:** "Cultural Resource Management Using Cultural Mapping". Workshop on cultural mapping and cultural resource management: Training for architects, archaeologists, government servants, site managers and prospective cultural heritage conservation and management MPhil/PhD candidates. 21-22 August 2006. The website describes the workshop as follows:

"The Cultural Resource Management Using Cultural Mapping Workshop will introduce cultural resource management with a focus on the use of cultural mapping techniques. It will include presentations from industry experts, tutorials, a site visit and on-site practicum. The objectives of the workshop are as follows:

- Introduction to the key issues in cultural resource management

- Introduction to cultural mapping
- Current examples using cultural mapping of tangible and intangible heritage
- Undertake a cultural mapping exercise at Lahore Fort
- Discuss how cultural mapping can be further applied in management “

[http://72.14.235.104/search?q=cache:GNIPMqNg2dsJ:www.unescobkk.org/uploads/media/Lahore\\_Program\\_-\\_Culture\\_Mapping\\_01.doc+%22cultural+mapping%22+UNESCO+Bangkok+Lahore&hl=en&gl=za&ct=clnk&cd=2](http://72.14.235.104/search?q=cache:GNIPMqNg2dsJ:www.unescobkk.org/uploads/media/Lahore_Program_-_Culture_Mapping_01.doc+%22cultural+mapping%22+UNESCO+Bangkok+Lahore&hl=en&gl=za&ct=clnk&cd=2)

**Havana, Cuba:** “New Approaches to Cultural Diversity: the Role of Communities”. The meeting consisted of three inter-related workshops focusing on community participation: “Intangible Cultural Heritage”, “Living Human Treasures in the Latin America-Caribbean Region”, and “Cultural Mapping and Indigenous Peoples”. Each workshop looked for ways of strengthening community participation and developing an effective strategy for implementing the 2003 and 2005 UNESCO Conventions in Latin America and the Caribbean. The mapping workshop produced its own Havana Communiqué on Cultural Mapping.

URL: [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=29830&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=29830&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

**Paris, France:** “La cartographie culturelle et ses possibles applications par les peuples autochtones” [Cultural mapping and its possible applications by indigenous peoples] UNESCO headquarters, 15-16 November 2006.

The workshop was facilitated by Giacomo Rambaldi (CTA), Nigel Crawhall (IPACC), and with input from Rachel Olson (UNESCO First Nations Canadian intern). The participants included Francophone indigenous fellows studying at UNESCO and staff from all of UNESCO's sections. The workshop produced a facilitation guide and report that will be posted on the website of the Culture Sector programme with indigenous peoples.

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