

# SHANDIA

Our common platform to facilitate direct funding to the territories of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities for actions that combat climate change, conserve biodiversity and sustain our rights and self-determined development.



**Global  
Alliance**  
of Territorial  
Communities



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# Table of Contents

WHO WE ARE.....	1
WHY DID WE ESTABLISH SHANDIA.....	1
SHANDIA VISION AND MISSION.....	5
SHANDIA'S FUNCTIONS.....	5
CROSS-CUTTING PRINCIPLES FOR SHANDIA'S OPERATIONS.....	6
SHANDIA PRINCIPLES FOR DONORS, ALLIES AND PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS	6
SHANDIA GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES.....	8
SHANDIA FORUM.....	8
PROGRESS 2023.....	9
FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES 2023.....	12
PRIORITY ACTIVITIES UNDER SHANDIA-RELATED FUNDING MECHANISMS..	12



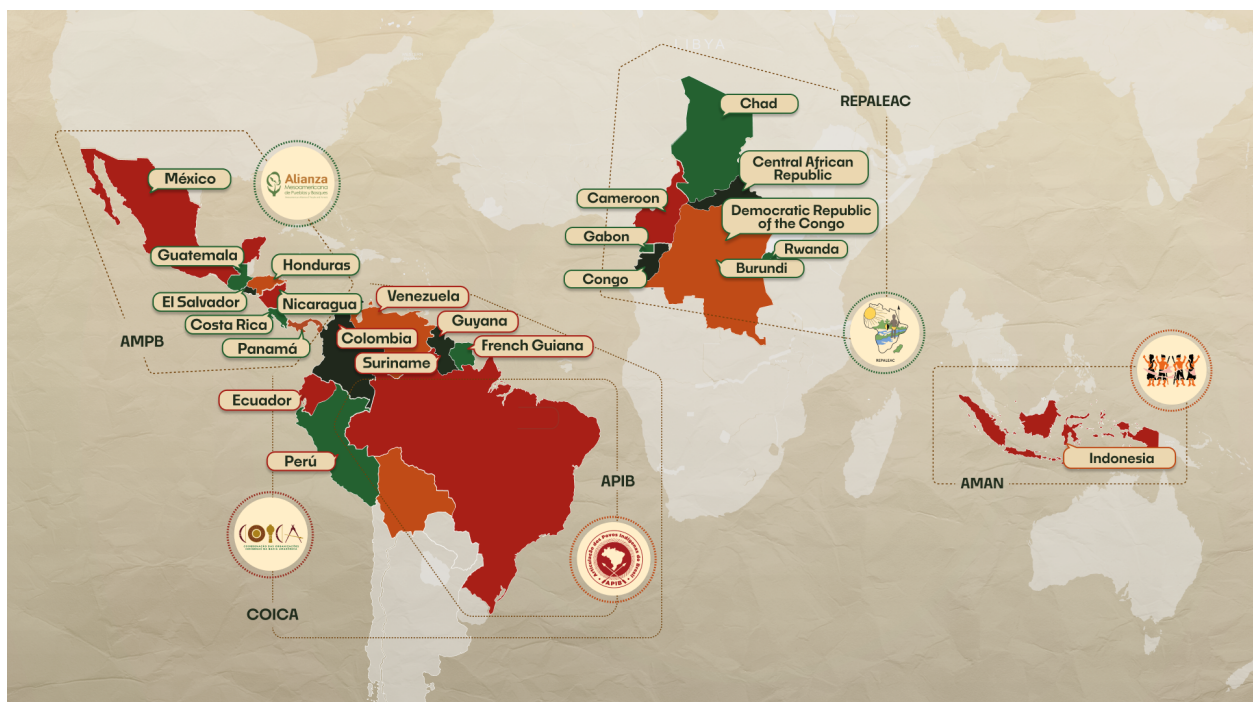
## WHO WE ARE

The Global Alliance of Territorial Communities (GATC) is a political platform of Indigenous peoples and local communities from some of the most important tropical and subtropical forests in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Our Alliance represents 35 million people in 24 countries, who defend over 958 million hectares of forest.

Our five member organisations are:

1. Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (AMAN), the Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Indonesian Archipelago, representing a population of more than 20 million people.
2. Alianza Mesoamericana de Pueblos y Bosques (AMPB), the Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forest, comprising 10 member organisations of indigenous peoples and local communities from 6 countries in the region.
3. Articulação Dos Povos Indígenas Do Brasil (APIB), the National Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, created by seven regional organisations that operate throughout Brazil.
4. Coordinadora de Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA), the Coordinator of Indigenous Peoples from the Amazon Basin, which comprises the regional federations from 9 Amazonian countries.
5. The Réseau des Populations Autochtones et Locales pour la Gestion Durable des Ecosystemes Forestiers d'Afrique Centrale (REPALEAC), the Platform of Indigenous and Local Populations for the Sustainable Management of Central African Forest Ecosystems, representing indigenous peoples and local communities in 8 countries of the Congo Basin.

Graphic 1: The territories of the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities and its member organizations.





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We have worked together for the past 8 years, with a collective mission to be a single voice to fight for the collective rights of our peoples and communities, for the legal recognition of our territories, for protecting Mother Earth and all human beings, and to combat the causes of climate change. In parallel, we increase the capacities of our member organizations to better protect our territories and ensure the full exercise of our cultures and livelihoods.

## **WHY DID WE ESTABLISH SHANDIA**

In 2022, the GATC launched Shandia as our common platform to facilitate direct funding to the territories of indigenous peoples and local communities for actions that combat climate change, conserve biodiversity and sustain our rights and self-determined development. The factors that led to this decision are briefly outlined below:

The world is currently grappling with a convergence of crises, including irreversible climate change, accelerated biodiversity collapse, human rights violations, and increasing inequalities. These challenges have profound implications for the health of our planet and the well-being and future of humanity.

In our territories, these intertwined crises are reflected in increased pressure on our lands, territories, natural resources and social fabric, resulting in environmental degradation, pollution, land grabbing, forced displacements, attacks on environmental and human rights defenders, poverty and outmigration of youth, among others. Our peoples and communities are among the most marginalized and impoverished groups within our respective societies. Notably, while indigenous peoples comprise only 6.2 % of the global population, we account for a staggering 18.7 % of the extreme poor<sup>1</sup>.

The cumulative impact on our lands, territories and natural resources, makes it increasingly difficult to uphold our traditional sustainable management practices and governance systems, and pass on traditional knowledge, practices and innovations to future generations.

Yet, our peoples and communities remain the protectors and guardians of vast traditional territories, which host many of the world's remaining forests and intact ecosystems and play a vital role in carbon sequestration and biodiversity. For example, an estimated 36% of the world's remaining intact forests and at least 24% of the above-ground carbon in tropical forests are found within indigenous peoples' territories. Deforestation rates on lands where indigenous peoples have

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<sup>1</sup> ILO, 2019: *Implementing the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No. 169: Towards an inclusive, sustainable and just future*, p. 13. Available [here](#)



secure tenure rights are significantly lower than in areas outside of our control<sup>2</sup>. Hence, we are essential partners for combating climate change, conserving biodiversity, and securing sustainable development and empowering our peoples and communities is not only a matter of justice and equity but also a strategic imperative.

The global society is mobilizing resources for achieving the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Global Biodiversity Framework. Yet, while our role is paramount, we face significant obstacles in accessing funding for initiatives in our territories.

There is no systematic tracking, but Rainforest Foundation Norway estimates that funding to tenure rights and forest management of indigenous peoples and local communities amounted to less than 1 percent of international climate development aid from 2011-2020<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, only a small fraction of funds is allocated directly to organizations led by indigenous peoples or local communities. A survey among 75 major indigenous peoples' organizations, national and regional networks and funding mechanisms from Africa, Asia and Latin America in 2022 revealed that only 6 of these had a budget above 1 million a year<sup>4</sup>. Under the 2021 Forest Tenure Pledge, which explicitly aims to increase direct support for indigenous peoples and local communities, it is only 7% of funding disbursed so far, which is allocated directly to an organization led by our peoples or communities<sup>5</sup>.

Most funds addressing indigenous peoples and local communities are channeled through multilateral agencies, governments, international NGOs and other so-called "intermediaries". For example, under the 2021 Forest Tenure Pledge, around 50% of total funding is channeled via international NGOs. A review of the projects funded by Norway from 2021-23 with a purpose related to the Pledge revealed only one project where funding went directly to an indigenous organization, constituting 0.19 % of the budget reviewed<sup>6</sup>.

The transaction costs of this indirect approach to funding are not known, but as the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities, we can affirm that our organizations and communities remain underfunded in the midst of the interwoven crises we are facing.

Moreover, where funding is available, it is often short-term, competitive and unpredictable, driven by supply rather than aligned with our self-determined priorities. In many cases, funding is

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<sup>2</sup> See data of the [World Resources Institute](#)

<sup>3</sup> Rainforest Foundation Norway, 2021: *Falling Short*. Available [here](#)

<sup>4</sup> Charapa 2022: *Directing Funds to Rights*, p. 31. Available [here](#)

<sup>5</sup> See the 2021-22 Annual report of the Forest Tenure Funders Group, p. 9. Available [here](#)

<sup>6</sup> GATC/Shandia data collection 2023, forthcoming publication.



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subject to complex rules and procedures that are often prohibitive for our organizations and do not support transparency and accountability towards communities.

Donors tend to be unaware of the organizational capacity of our organizations, and we are often left out of the dialogue between donors and the so-called intermediary organizations. Thereby, our fundamental rights to participation in decision-making and to free, prior and informed consent are not upheld. This has negative implications for the self-determination, institutional ownership, capacity and empowerment of our organizations and communities.

We appreciate the efforts of the donors, strategic allies and partner organizations that have worked with us over the past years, to change this situation. For example, the 2021 Forest Tenure Pledge, comes with a commitment to change current donor practices and significantly increase direct funding, including through engagement with and investment in funding mechanisms led by indigenous peoples and local communities<sup>7</sup>. We also notice enhanced dialogue and support from our strategic allies, in strengthening outreach and advocacy and engaging decision-makers.

Within our own alliance and networks, we are working hard to strengthen our institutional capacities, and establish the territorial funding mechanisms that will effectively channel the needed funding to our territories and communities.

Yet, as also acknowledged by donors, the pace of change can be frustratingly slow<sup>8</sup>, and we still have not seen the needed transformative change in funding patterns that match the urgency of the crises we are facing.

The creation of Shandia is our response to this situation. Shandia is our common platform to facilitate direct funding to the territories of indigenous peoples and local communities for actions that combat climate change, conserve biodiversity and sustain our rights and self-determined development.

## **SHANDIA VISION AND MISSION**

Shandia is established by the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities as our common platform to facilitate direct funding to the territories of indigenous peoples and local communities.

- The vision of Shandia is that indigenous peoples and local communities have access to direct funding for actions that combat climate change, conserve biodiversity and sustain our rights and self-determined development in our territories, based on identity and traditional knowledge.

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<sup>7</sup> See the 2021-22 Annual report of the Forest Tenure Funders Group, p. 10. Available [here](#)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid



- Shandia is our common platform to promote and facilitate direct, predictable, effective and sustainable funding to our peoples and communities through the establishment of direct regional and national funding mechanisms, capacity-building, exchange of experiences and enhanced dialogue with donors and partners.

## **SHANDIA'S FUNCTIONS**

As our common platform, Shandia will have a number of functions that will strengthen our individual and collective efforts to ensure direct funding to our territories. Shandia will:

- Support our peoples and communities in developing long-term territorial funding strategies that reflect their needs and aspirations, and set clear priorities for funding
- Strengthen the institutional capacities of our peoples and communities to access and manage funding
- Support the establishment and strengthening of territorial funding mechanisms governed by our peoples and communities
- Facilitate a strategic and sustained dialogue with donors to increase and improve funding to our peoples and communities
- Facilitate the flow of funds to the regional and national territorial funding mechanisms governed by our peoples and communities
- Support the capacity building processes of the territorial funding mechanisms at the national and/or regional levels
- Exchange experiences and good practices for ensuring transparency, accountability, flexibility, inclusion and sustainability
- Develop principles and guidance for donors, allies and partner organizations that work with us, to follow a rights-based approach to funding and collaboration with our peoples and communities
- Develop simple reporting, accounting, monitoring and evaluation systems and procedures that can be used and adapted by our institutions, as well as by donors, allies and partner organizations
- Establish clear rules and protocols for action, communication and coordination with the territorial funding mechanisms established by our peoples and communities (recognizing the positions of the mechanisms and the territories where they operate)
- Monitor the status and trends of funding allocated for and received by our peoples and communities
- Help coordinate a system for monitoring the impacts of funding on our territories, biodiversity, rights and lives



- Document and disseminate our experiences as a source of inspiration for the global movement of indigenous peoples and local communities

## **CROSS-CUTTING PRINCIPLES FOR SHANDIA'S OPERATIONS**

In all of Shandia's actions and activities, we will adhere to the following principles:

- Inclusive and legitimate leadership, by representatives freely chosen by our peoples and communities, through the traditional mechanisms for democratic election and renewal of leadership of each territory
- Transparency and accountability towards our peoples and communities, contextualized to the territorial realities
- Full and effective participation of women, young people, persons with disabilities and other sectors of our peoples and communities
- Solidarity and prioritization of those that are most in need
- Respect for and integration of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices in all activities
- Consideration for economic, social and environmental sustainability of all activities
- Respect and recognition of the autonomy of the regional and national territorial funds as guarantors of sustainability
- Building of local capacities from the outset
- Promotion of the most agile and direct way of decision-making and channeling of funds (the subsidiarity principles)

## **SHANDIA PRINCIPLES FOR DONORS, ALLIES AND PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

In our collaboration with donors, allies and partner organizations, we will promote the following principles:

### **Recognize us as rights-holders:**

- **Respect:** Recognition of our peoples and communities as rights-holders, with rights under international, regional and national laws
- **Participation:** Full and effective participation of our representative institutions in any decisions that affect us, upholding the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent
- **Operationalization:** Institutional policies and procedures to ensure that our rights are upheld and strengthened through collaboration.





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### **Strengthen our partnerships:**

- **Recognition:** Recognition of our peoples and communities as guardians, actors and essential partners for combating climate change, conserving biodiversity and achieving sustainable development
- **Trust and exchange of experience:** Deepening dialogues at global, regional and national levels, paired with mutual capacity-building and learning
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Respect for diverse languages, decision-making processes, cultural expressions and notions of time, reciprocity and gratitude
- **Common values:** ensuring that funding sources respect socio-cultural diversity, follow sustainability principles and respect human rights.
- **Coordination with regional and national territorial funding mechanisms:** respect, articulation and support for each region's constituency and priorities.

### **Support our own priorities and aspirations:**

- **Self-determination:** Respect for the self-determined priorities, strategies and decision-making processes of our peoples and communities
- **Alignment:** Alignment with our priorities and strategies and use of our own institutions and systems for implementation of activities
- **Flexibility:** Possibility to adjust to changing political, social and environmental circumstances, and to respond to emergencies

### **Streamline procedures:**

- **Simplification:** Simplification of bureaucratic requirements, formats, systems and procedures to contextualize these to the situation of our peoples and communities
- **Harmonization:** Coordination, sharing of information and adoption of common requirements, formats, systems and procedures to avoid duplication, competition, and institutional stress
- **Mutual accountability:** Reporting, accounting, monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure accountability for both the donors and our peoples and communities

### **Enhance sustainability:**

- **Predictability:** Ensuring long-term core support to our governance institutions and management systems
- **Leverage:** Help mobilize additional support and resources, including from domestic and private sources



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## **SHANDIA GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES**

Shandia operates under the strategic direction of the GATC Leadership Council.

A global Shandia Coordinator will be employed within the GATC Secretariat, to head the implementation of the Shandia strategic plan. In daily work, the Shandia Coordinator will report to the Executive Secretary and the Co-chairs of the GATC.

To ensure communication and coordination of Shandia, the leadership of each GATC member will appoint a Shandia liaison person from within their organization or their respective territorial funding mechanism.

The Shandia Coordinator, in close coordination and collaboration with the Shandia liaison persons, will prepare a 3-year strategic plan and indicative budget for consideration and approval by the GATC Leadership Council. Based on the approved Strategic Plan, the Shandia Coordinator will prepare annual work plans and budgets, to be approved and supervised by the GATC Executive Secretary and Co-chairs. The Shandia coordinator will prepare annual reports, which will be presented to the GATC Leadership Council, and also shared publicly.

Shandia will not be a mechanism for transferring funds to regional and national mechanisms but will manage the funds necessary for its own operation under the governance structures described above. Initially, Shandia will make use of a fiscal sponsor with proven experience in funding mechanisms and global fundraising strategies, selected by the GATC Leadership Council from among its members, the territorial funding mechanisms established by its members or close allies.

## **SHANDIA FORUM**

Shandia will annually organize a global Shandia Forum, which will convene representatives of the GATC member organizations and their respective regional and national territorial funding mechanisms, likeminded territorial funds established by indigenous peoples and local communities, along with key donors, strategic allies and resource persons. In order to save resources, the Shandia Forum will be organized in conjunction with other events that bring many of the key actors together, such as the annual GATC Forum/Leadership meeting or the New York Climate Week.

The global Shandia Forum will review progress in advancing direct territorial funding to the various regions and countries; identify barriers, good practices and lessons learned for increasing direct territorial funding; agree on simplified procedures and formats for ensuring accountability;



identify funding gaps, priorities and opportunities; exchange experiences with monitoring of impact and; create a space for mutual capacity-building and learning.

In collaboration with the national and regional territorial funding mechanisms, Shandia can also organize regional or national donor forums. The objective of the regional or national forums is to share lessons learned and track the extent of the achievements and impacts of the implementation of direct funding mechanisms, taking into account the specific issues, cultural sensitivities and challenges in each region and country.

## **PROGRESS 2023**

So far, 2023 has been a busy year for the operationalization of Shandia, both in its global functions and in its support to the establishment of territorial funding mechanisms by its members. Key achievements include:

### **Consolidation of Shandia:**

- GATC has consolidated the Shandia platform, on the basis of data collection and analysis, internal consultations, discussion and finalization of constituting documents<sup>9</sup>

### **Data collection**

- Shandia has compiled data on current funding streams to GATC countries and members, data from allies and organizations that collaborate with indigenous peoples and local communities, and an overview of experiences of funding mechanisms led by indigenous peoples and local communities
- GATC is exploring different approaches and methodologies for ensuring continuous data collection, tracking and monitoring of funds in our countries and communities

### **Establishment and strengthening of funding mechanisms:**

#### **Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara**

- In May 2023, AMAN launched the Nusantara Fund, which is a unique mechanism for providing direct funding to indigenous communities across Indonesia<sup>10</sup>. The idea to establish such a mechanism was conceived in the mid of 2021 by AMAN, KPA (Agrarian Reform Consortium) and WALHI (Friends of the Earth Indonesia); the 3 largest mass-based organizations in Indonesia. Each organization has internal direct funding mechanisms to support the indigenous peoples and local communities that are members of their respective organizations. AMAN, KPA and WALHI realized that by joining forces

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<sup>9</sup> Find more information at the [GATC website](#)

<sup>10</sup> See more at the website of the Nusantara Fund ([nusantarafund.org](https://nusantarafund.org))



to create a joint direct funding mechanism, it would be a force to accelerate change from the local level and provide a greater contribution to reducing global emissions. At the same time, the establishment of the Nusantara Fund is also meant to highlight that direct



Picture 1: Launch of the Nusantara Fund, Photography by TINTA.

funding for indigenous peoples and local communities is possible. The preparation phase took about 2 years, including consultation processes with indigenous peoples and local communities, finalization of Manual Operational Guidelines, introduction of the idea at the global level, trial phase of the mechanism in 30 communities and obtaining legality. Finally, on May 8th 2023, the Nusantara Fund was launched in Jakarta, Indonesia.

- In connection with the launch of the Nusantara Fund, AMAN also hosted a global exchange of funding mechanisms led by indigenous peoples and local communities. The exchange was facilitated by Spring Strategies. The purpose of the exchange was to strengthen the global community of funds led by indigenous peoples and local communities, and increase their impact for communities through exchange, cross-learning and mutual support. The three days exchange funded by The Ford Foundation involved the Podáali Fund, the Mesoamerican Territorial Fund (FTM), the FIMI/AYNI Fund (Indigenous Women's Fund), the Babaçu Fund, the Nusantara Fund, the Indigenous Peoples of Asia Solidarity Fund (IPAS), the Pawanka Fund, the International Land and Forest Tenure Facility and Shandia. The exchange discussed issues around compliance requirements, funding landscape and financial sustainability, governance,



accountability and grant making, institutional strengthening, collective engagement and next steps.

- **AMAN** has also contributed to the establishment of the Indigenous Peoples of Asia Solidarity Fund, a regional mechanism that aims to provide direct funding for indigenous people across 14 countries in Asia. AMAN is serving as the fiscal sponsor of IPAS while it is undergoing its process for legal registration and institution building.

### **The Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests (AMPB):**

- The AMPB continues to strengthen and consolidate the Mesoamerican Territorial Fund (FTM) by consolidating its management and operational structures and expanding its outreach to indigenous peoples, local communities and its member and non-member organizations. Recent achievements include the expansion of its portfolio of funds under management, the securing of 8 projects supported by the Climate and Land Use Alliance (CLUA), the opening of the third call for proposals in 2023 to invest in indigenous territories and local communities for an amount of USD 1 million, and the expansion of the FTM's reach beyond AMPB members<sup>11</sup>.



Picture 2: The Mesoamerican Climate Week reunited 200 participants in Panamá, Photography by AMPB.

- AMBP led the first Mesoamerican Climate Week held in Panama City from June 13-16, 2023, to publicize and highlight the territorial experiences of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in forest management, care and conservation<sup>12</sup>. The more than 200 participants discussed the importance and prospects for direct territorial funding, and concluded that the FTM is a real and effective mechanism for direct investment in their

<sup>11</sup> See more at [AMPB's website](#)

<sup>12</sup> See more about [AMPB's Climate Week](#)



territories. They also highlighted the need for pre-investments to strengthen local capacities in project formulation, monitoring and documentation of activities. Likewise, funding exercises should recognize the counterpart and the scope of local actions being undertaken to strengthen sustainability and governance.

- **APIB** has begun an internal process of political and strategic reflection with its grassroots organizations on the creation of a national fund for Brazil's indigenous peoples. The initial aim is to create a mechanism to guarantee the autonomy of the indigenous movement in the struggle and advocacy for their rights, among other objectives to be formulated in a consultative process. The initial proposal is for this funding mechanism to be part of an ecosystem of funds operating at national level and in conjunction with regional, local and community funds. Thus, the process of reflection on setting up a national indigenous peoples' fund is also intended to support and encourage the implementation of funds at different levels<sup>13</sup>.



Picture 3: Indigenous Peoples reunite during the Acampamento Terra Livre (ATL) in Brasilia:  
Photography by: Giulianne Martins

- **REPALEAC** has adopted its overall strategic plan<sup>14</sup> towards 2025, which aims to improve the inclusion and participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in environmental, economic, social and cultural policies in at least 8 countries of the Congo Basin. In May 2023, in collaboration with the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), REPALEAC organized

<sup>13</sup> See more at [APIB's website](#)

<sup>14</sup> See [REPALEAC's Strategic Plan](#)



the first sub-regional forum of indigenous women of the Congo Basin<sup>15</sup>. Both the strategy development and the sub-regional forum are important stepping stones towards establishment of a sub-regional funding mechanism for the Congo Basin, which will directly finance the territories. Next step is the organization of a workshop in October 2023, to discuss the governance structure and operational features of the fund.



Picture 4: The First Subregional Forum of Indigenous and Local Community Women in Central Africa and the Congo Basin, Photography by Victoire Douniama.

## FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES 2023

- The GATC leadership Council will be present at the New York Climate Week in **September** and will report on progress in consolidating the Shandia platform.
- GATC members will initiate an internal process among their members and regional and national networks to communicate about the consolidation and operationalization of Shandia, and gather input and recommendations for the Shandia strategic plan
- GATC will co-organize a workshop in Paris in November, to foster a broad discussion about the monitoring of funds to indigenous peoples and local communities in key institutions within the global system for development finance statistics, such as the OECD-DAC.

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<sup>15</sup> See: [Report of the Subregional Forum](#)



- GATC/Shandia will present consolidated results of our work at COP 28, December 2023, and seek an in-depth dialogue with donors and allies on how to significantly increase direct funding for indigenous peoples and local communities over the two remaining years of the Forest Tenure Pledge that was launched at COP 26.
- Participation in the GEF 7 Assembly in Vancouver from August 21 to 25, 2023 for the launch of the global biodiversity fund.

## **PRIORITY ACTIVITIES UNDER SHANDIA-RELATED FUNDING MECHANISMS**

Priorities for funding will vary from context to context and may also change over time as some aspirations get fulfilled while new challenges emerge. However, strategic activities identified as key priorities across the regions include:

### **Recognition and Realization of Rights**

- Public policies, advocacy and dialogues to advance the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities
- Land and natural resource mapping and legal recognition
- Legal support to human rights and environmental defenders and women to stop human rights violations
- Legal and economic support for victims of militarization
- Awareness raising and advocacy to implement Free, Prior and Informed Consent

### **Decision Making and Capacity Building**

- Strengthening of the organizations and traditional institutions of indigenous peoples and local communities at the local, subnational, national and regional levels, including capacity building on advocacy, leadership, decision-making, and financial, administrative, project and resource management
- Capacity building for women/youth/persons with disabilities on necessary skills to adapt to the impacts of climate change
- Climate awareness and education at the community level
- Capacity-building for environmental and climate-related negotiation and diplomacy

### **Management of Territories**

- Community-based spatial planning as well as territorial, land use and natural resource management
- Rehabilitation of land and territories, including reforestation and environmental restoration
- Water conservation and management





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- Coastal zone management, including mangrove planting

### **Economies and Energy**

- Sustainable, environmentally friendly local economy
- Community renewable energy and technology transfer to combat climate change
- Food sovereignty
- Development of biocultural and green economy activities

### **Alert and emergency Response System**

- Disaster risk reduction and risk management, including early warning systems and disaster response
- Climate change migration prevention and support for climate refugees
- Health programs (for new diseases) that integrate and promote traditional and local knowledge

### **Cultural Identity and Traditional Knowledge**

- Documentation of traditional knowledge, innovation and technologies
- Protection and promotions of cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and languages