

Conversations with the Earth 2009-10

Summary of the development of the hubs and network in 2009

Conversations With The Earth (CWE) is an indigenous-led multi-media campaign to amplify indigenous voices in the global discourse on climate change. CWE is a respectful partnership of indigenous-led organisation Land is Life, experts in Participatory Video InsightShare, and award-winning photographer Nicolas Villaume. Since March 2009 InsightShare has worked with seven communities across three continents to help seed a growing network of community-owned video hubs. In December 2009 local video trainers and hub representatives participated COP15, the UN Climate talks in Copenhagen, Denmark and presented their films. In this document we look back on all the passionate work that already led to such great results during the past year.

Community Video Hubs

During the past year, CWE has planted the seed of Participatory Video (PV) among indigenous peoples around the world. Locally-led community video hubs were started up in Kenya (Maasai), Panama (Kuna), Peru (Andes/Quechua), the Canadian Arctic (Inuit) and the Philippines (Igorot). On top of this, InsightShare were able to set up an additional hub in Cameroon with the Baka Hunter Gatherers and to include in the CWE portfolio a powerful video from Pacific Islanders in Samoa.

Reflecting the very diverse ecosystems in these seven geographic regions, the Indigenous videographers produced a total of twelve community-authored videos that show their communities' responses to the impacts of climate change. The videos make clear how closely local biodiversity is connected to their unique cultures and food systems. By amplifying the authentic and diverse voices of indigenous people living in their traditional environments, the custodians of bio-cultural diversity now finally have a chance to contribute to the global debate on climate change!

The Participatory Video projects in the 7 countries directly trained 150 indigenous people in video and communication

skills. With local screenings to literally hundreds more people, and outreach by facilitators to engage youth in the issues for the very first time, PV led to education and awareness raising of climate change issues among community members of all ages. Documentation of impacts measured PV's power to not only give voice, but to empower and build local self-esteem. Moreover, PV training became a catalyst for reflection leading to local action, e.g. climate change adaptation and rights-based advocacy work which will continue to unfold in 2010-2011.

"I learned that we have common things as indigenous people on earth; the same problems and a specific culture. This makes us sail in the same boat."

Jemimah (Maasai, Kenya)

On top of this, the indigenous facilitators are now training people from other communities! For example, indigenous representative from Peru, Irma Canchumani, was responsible for training Kuna communities in Panama, working alongside InsightShare trainer Maja Tillmann. This deeper level of capacity building will be part of our core focus in 2010-11. To begin with, in April 2010, local representatives will attend the 'World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights

of Mother Earth' in Bolivia, where they are invited to host a side event and run PV workshops with local indigenous organisations.

Hub Updates:

The Peru hub takes the lead on Coordination and Communication up to 2011 (rotating role) and they will organise the next hub gathering which we hope will take place in Peru.

Philippines partner APIYN is already becoming a regional training centre in Participatory Video and invited to capacity build indigenous peoples across Asia Pacific region.

Cameroon partner Okani has raised \$25,000 from local sources using their brilliant first video as a proposal. This will enable them to run a two-year rights-based PV programme. They will share their experiences with the other hubs.

The Inuit Arctic hub is expanding to include the Dene community in Fort Good Hope and will work on Tar Sands campaign later this year.

COP15 Denmark

In November 2009 15 local video trainers and hub representatives travelled to Copenhagen to present their



films and participate in the UN Climate conference. During the process they had become strong advocates for their communities, and become well informed on the issues of climate change. CWE made it possible for the representatives - a diverse group of men and women aged 14 to 70 years - to build the confidence to present their stories to large audiences, to speak to media, to present their community videos, to run workshops and lead the multi-media exhibit.

"I'm pleased I went to COP15 and was one of the first women out of my whole community to make it out so far without a man leading the way."

Jeanette (Dene: Canada)

During COP15, InsightShare secured several excellent platforms for sharing videos, and two high profile permanent exhibition spaces at Klimaforum and the Danish National Museum, despite massive competition for space. Approximately 50,000 people passed through the Klimaforum in December! We feel there was good engagement with audiences at various levels, as well as participating in local community events with Danish public. There were

overwhelming responses from audiences following face-to-face contact with hub representatives. We estimate in Copenhagen over 2000 people saw the films and met the hub representatives. The PV booth in the exhibit was well attended. The workshops and the screenings were full to capacity. We distributed a 1000 DVDs.

On top of this, InsightShare coordinated an active media campaign in Denmark, facilitating interviews with the world press. Stories were published by at least eight international newswires including Reuters (UK) and EFE (Spain), two of the world's largest wires. Our group at Bella Centre also spawned significant television coverage including ABC News and CNN (USA), TV Today (India), Television Española (Spain), Channel 4 News (UK), ZDF (Germany), France Deux TV, and Norwegian TV. Stories were captured in five languages from about 90 on-line news sites across 17 countries.

The CWE website was successfully launched at COP15 (National Museum) with 5000 hits recorded in the first few days. Besides, InsightShare's Nick Lunch presented CWE at various international fora:

Anchorage Climate Summit, Environmental Grant Makers Annual Retreat and Bioneers; in UK - The Worldly Leadership Summit, to students at Cambridge University, Reading University and University of Kent; in Spain - University of Seville and Fundacion Tres Culturas.

"We are not only ambassadors for our culture but we are all learning together (...) we are hopefully growing to become leaders in a climate revolution."

Pam (Inuk: Canada)

Hub Retreat

Prior to the Climate talks, InsightShare organised and facilitated a retreat with all hub representatives in Hou, Denmark, and joined by Brian Keane from Land is Life. The local action plans that were developed during this retreat enable the hubs to lead the process from this year. The hub representatives are becoming ambassadors for their communities. Through them local perspectives will be amplified and communities will get more of a say. InsightShare will build on this emerging grass roots autonomy by requesting local elders to

set up a Hubs Steering Committee to guide the CWE outreach and campaign work in the future.

The hub retreat was a highlight for all participants as it showed the amazing effect of CWE: the development of an international family of hub representatives who hold a unique bond and common purpose! InsightShare is very proud of being one of the drivers behind this process.

Looking forward

In 2010 CWE films have already been accepted for several international film festivals held in Mexico, Bolivia, Slovenia and London and the mobile UN University Film Festival.

Overall InsightShare feel the CWE project is having the desired impact and we are

optimistic about the future autonomy of the hub network.

Moreover our participation in CWE is helping us to develop our own organisational capacity and to build our confidence and experience to take on a wider remit; including network building and organising international gatherings and exchanges.

CWE has confirmed funding in 2010 to continue expanding its reach and effectiveness.

"We marched together with all the other indigenous people from around the world, walking as one. I was so touched and felt my leaders from up above watching and being proud of everyone that was there."

Jeanette (Dene: Fort Good Hope, Canada)

The Hubs all have their own budgets to manage this year and hub reps will receive stipends to support their role as local hub activators. A CWE Hub Steering Committee is being formed from local elders.

InsightShare are discussing future funding opportunities with The Christensen Fund to capacity build community hubs in Ethiopia, Northern Mexico and Kyrgyzstan and to integrate these into the CWE network.

Several other funders are actively considering supporting the hubs in creating video updates on the impacts of climate change to screen at COP16 (Mexico) in November.

Special thanks to the organisations and individuals that contributed to Conversations With The Earth in 2009:

Our funders:

The Christensen Fund
Artists Project Earth
The Lia Fund
Klimaforum09 / Danish Government
UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme

Our partners:

Land is Life
Nicolas Villaume

Our supporters:

Sonja and Karen Swift
Wooloo.org (New Life Copenhagen)
Residents of Ballonparken, Copenhagen

Contact Details:

Nick Lunch - nlunch@insightshare.org

For more information about Conversations With The Earth

www.conversationsearth.org

For more information about InsightShare

www.insightshare.org

