

Cultural approaches to WISE USE OF WETLANDS – past, present and future

المناهج الثقافية للاستخدام الحكيم للأراضي الرطبة - الماضي والحاضر والمستقبل

Approches culturelles de l'UTILISATION RATIONNELLE DES ZONES HUMIDES - passées, présentes et futures

Enfoque cultural al USO RACIONAL DE LOS HUMEDALES- pasado, presente y futuro

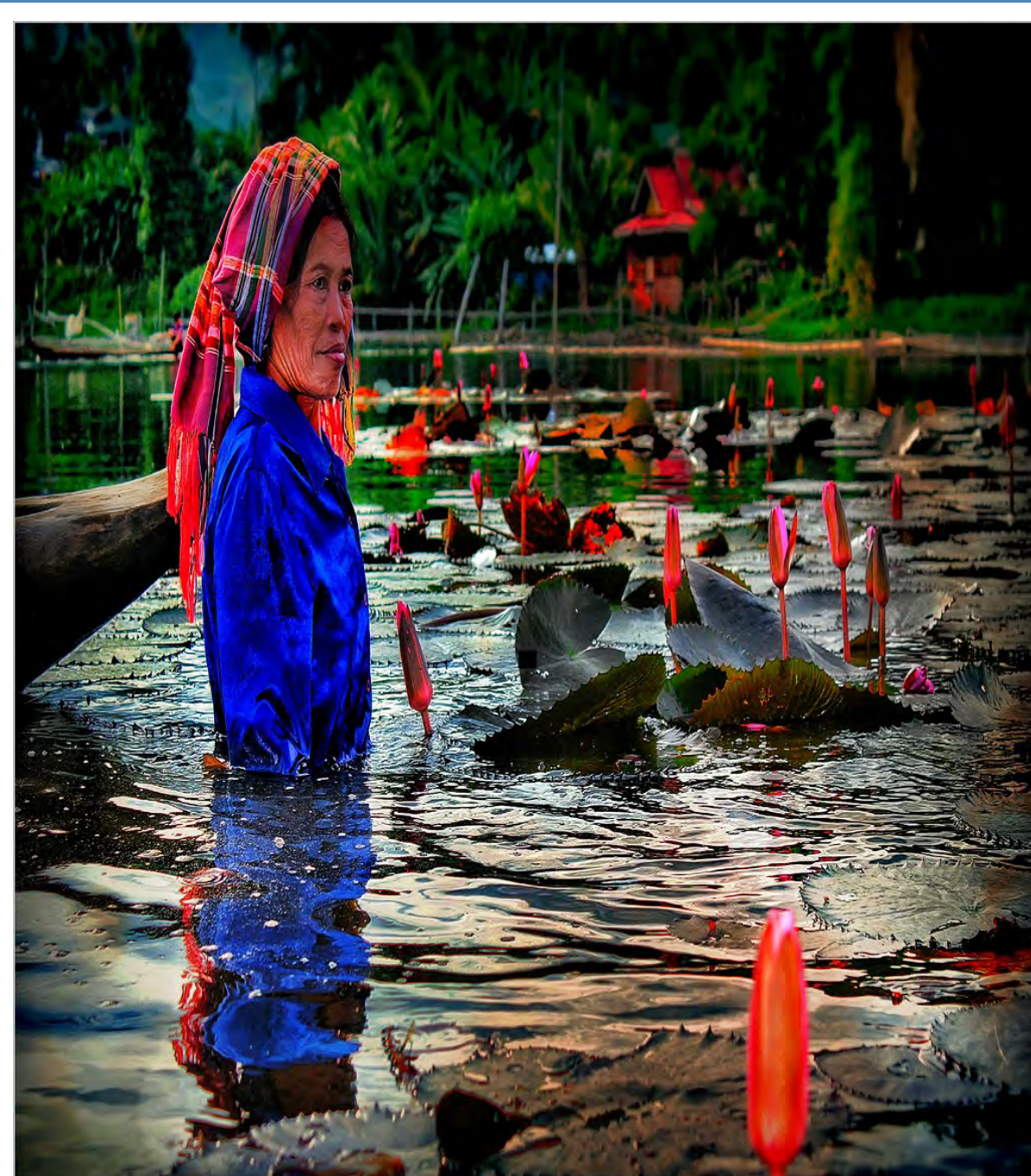
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Global report: Indigenous peoples, local communities & wetlands

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BACKGROUND

- The world's wetlands overlap with the territories and lands of many indigenous peoples and local communities.
- Their wise and customary use of Ramsar Sites and other wetlands can therefore play an important role in the conservation of these important and highly threatened ecosystems.
- A new global report provides a compilation of the Ramsar Convention's data on indigenous peoples and local communities, as requested by Resolution XII.2, para 20.



KEY FINDINGS

- Over 70% of Contracting Parties promote the participation of stakeholders in decision-making on wetland planning and management.
- Over 50% involve local stakeholders in the selection of new Ramsar Sites.
- Over 90% of Ramsar Sites are recognized as providing cultural ecosystem services.
- However, fewer than 15% of these sites are formally recognized under the Convention's four official cultural values.
- These cultural values, in addition to ecological values, are relevant in the designation of Ramsar Sites (Resolution IX.21, para 15).

CULTURAL VALUES ARE RELEVANT IN THE DESIGNATION OF RAMSAR SITES (IN ADDITION TO ECOLOGICAL VALUES)

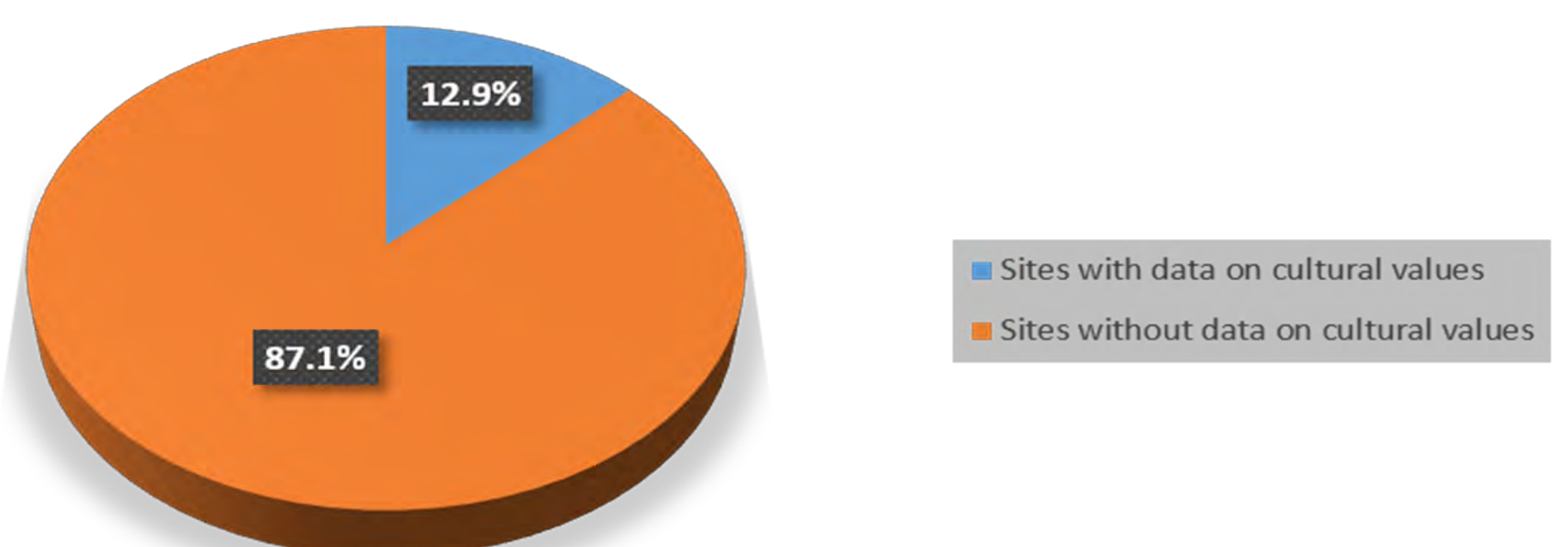
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| (i) | Sites which provide a model of wetland wise use , demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland. |
| (ii) | Sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland. |
| (iii) | Sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples . |
| (iv) | Sites where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland. |

OPTIONS FOR ACTION (Detailed 'options for action' can be found in *'The relationship of indigenous peoples and local communities with wetlands'*)

- Update and complete data on the cultural values of Ramsar Sites as this is of fundamental importance for indigenous peoples and local communities, given their association with wetlands through many dimensions of culture.
- As appropriate, adapt laws and policies to strengthen participation and governance, enhance the livelihood benefits of wetlands, and apply a Rights Based Approach, in line with the strong connections between the rights of people and the conservation of ecosystems (Resolution 34/L33 of the UN Human Rights Council, March 2017).
- Acknowledge the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, for example by updating the Convention's 1999 *'Guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous people's participation in the management of wetlands'*.
- Adopt the draft resolution on *'Cultural values, indigenous peoples and local communities, and climate change mitigation and adaptation in wetlands'*, which acknowledges and seeks to enhance the important role that these groups play in climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Raise the profile of indigenous peoples and local communities at future Ramsar COPs, for example by facilitating their participation in COPs, including as members of national delegations (as urged in Recommendation 6.3, COP6).

Fewer than 15% of Ramsar Sites are formally recognized for their cultural values

(Source: RSIS, November 2017)



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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