

# ABC Futures

## Area Based Conservation Futures

### Programme and objectives

Rethinking Biodiversity Conservation with Indigenous  
and Traditional Communities

Jelle Behagel, Project Co-lead (with Bas Verschuuren)  
Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group, Wageningen University

20 October 2026

An aerial photograph of a beach scene. In the foreground, many people are swimming in the ocean, with waves breaking. Further back, a large group of people is walking along the sandy shore. The background is filled with lush green trees and vegetation. The overall scene is vibrant and shows a popular recreational area.

# Area Based Conservation Futures, under the Global Biodiversity Framework

Supported by:  
Wageningen Global  
Sustainability Programme



# Area Based Conservation Futures, under the Global Biodiversity Framework

Supported by:  
Many partners





ABC  
FUTURES

## Indigenous conservation, under the Global Biodiversity Framework

**30X30 - Target 3:**  
**Protect 30% of the**  
**earth's surface by 2030**



Kunming-Montreal

**GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK**



Kunming-Montreal

# GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

<https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/3>

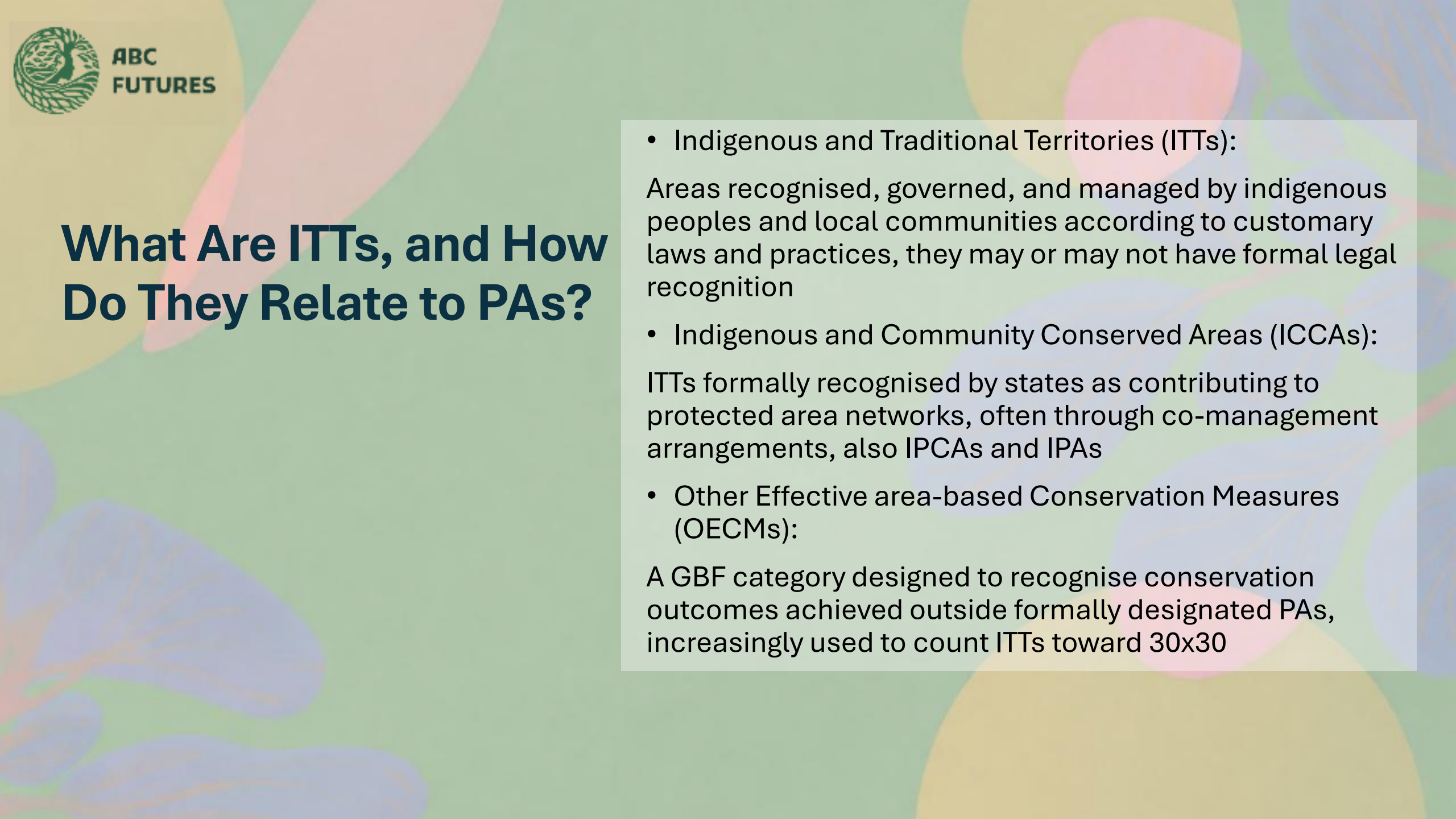
[GBF HOME](#) // TARGET 3

## Target 3

### Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas

*Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.*





# What Are ITTs, and How Do They Relate to PAs?

- Indigenous and Traditional Territories (ITTs):

Areas recognised, governed, and managed by indigenous peoples and local communities according to customary laws and practices, they may or may not have formal legal recognition

- Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs):

ITTs formally recognised by states as contributing to protected area networks, often through co-management arrangements, also IPCAs and IPAs

- Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs):

A GBF category designed to recognise conservation outcomes achieved outside formally designated PAs, increasingly used to count ITTs toward 30x30



## 17% Protected Areas (PAs)

A PA is a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.

40% overlap

*Contested rights,  
governance and management*

## ?% Other Effective Conservation measures

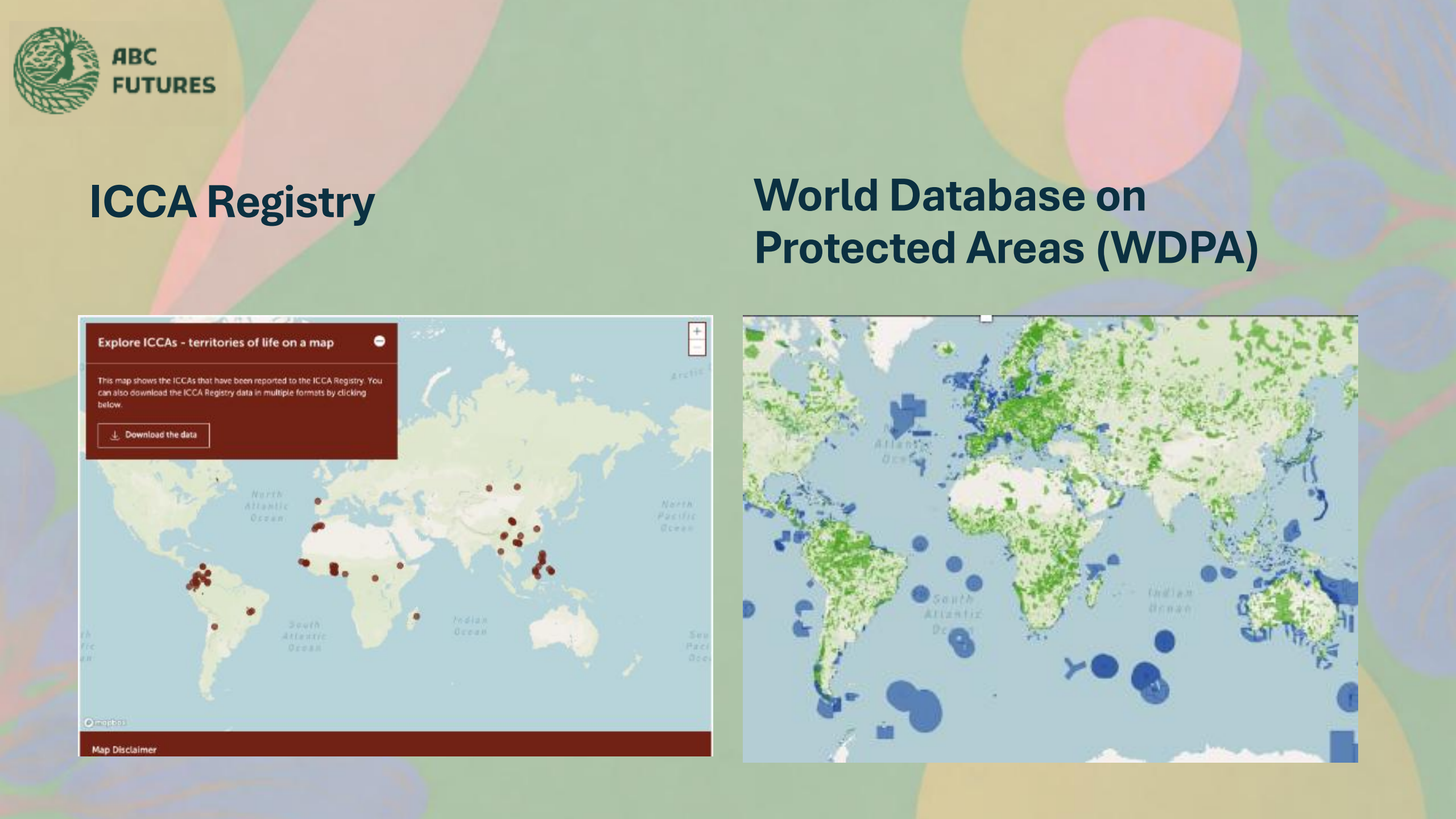
An OECM is a geographically defined area other than a PA, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values.

?% overlap

*Contested rights,  
governance and management*

## 30% Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs)

An "ICCA" is a specific territory, area, or body of natural resources with a close association between a specific indigenous people or local community in combination with effective local governance and conservation of nature.



## ICCA Registry



## World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA)



# Four themes structure the project

## 1 The Political and legal context for ITTs

How are ITTs part of national legislation, NBSAPs, and how rights and protection are granted in practice?



## 2 The knowledge practices and worldviews of IPLCs

How to support sustainable management of ITTs, including positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes? What strategies are available to maintain, recover or renew them?



## 4 Presence within, bordering, or overlap of ITTs with PAs

What synergies and conflicts exist between strategies for conservation governance and management of ITTs with PAs?



## 3 IPLCs are vulnerable to pressures caused by external drivers

How do global and regional processes affect the social-ecological systems of ITTs?



# How are rights granted in practice?

Formal recognition of ITTs can bring resources and legal protection, but it can also impose external governance frameworks that undermine the very indigenous institutions that made the area effective in the first place



# How is local knowledge used and safeguarded?

Local knowledge has developed over long time periods within social-ecological systems, yet social and ecological change is increasing in speed and scope



# How do external pressures affect ITTs?

Extractive activities impact indigenous and traditional territories in increasing scale and depth. How can traditional practices and knowledge effectively offer resistance to machines, capital and guns?





The protected area approach to nature conservationism is very successful in some places. But it is also built on a modernist ontology that separates nature from people.





Suriname



Kenya



Brazil



Mozambique



Suriname



Kenya



Brazil

Mozambique





- Train local people to become PhD./MSc. researchers.

Through co-production workshops find out what works locally.

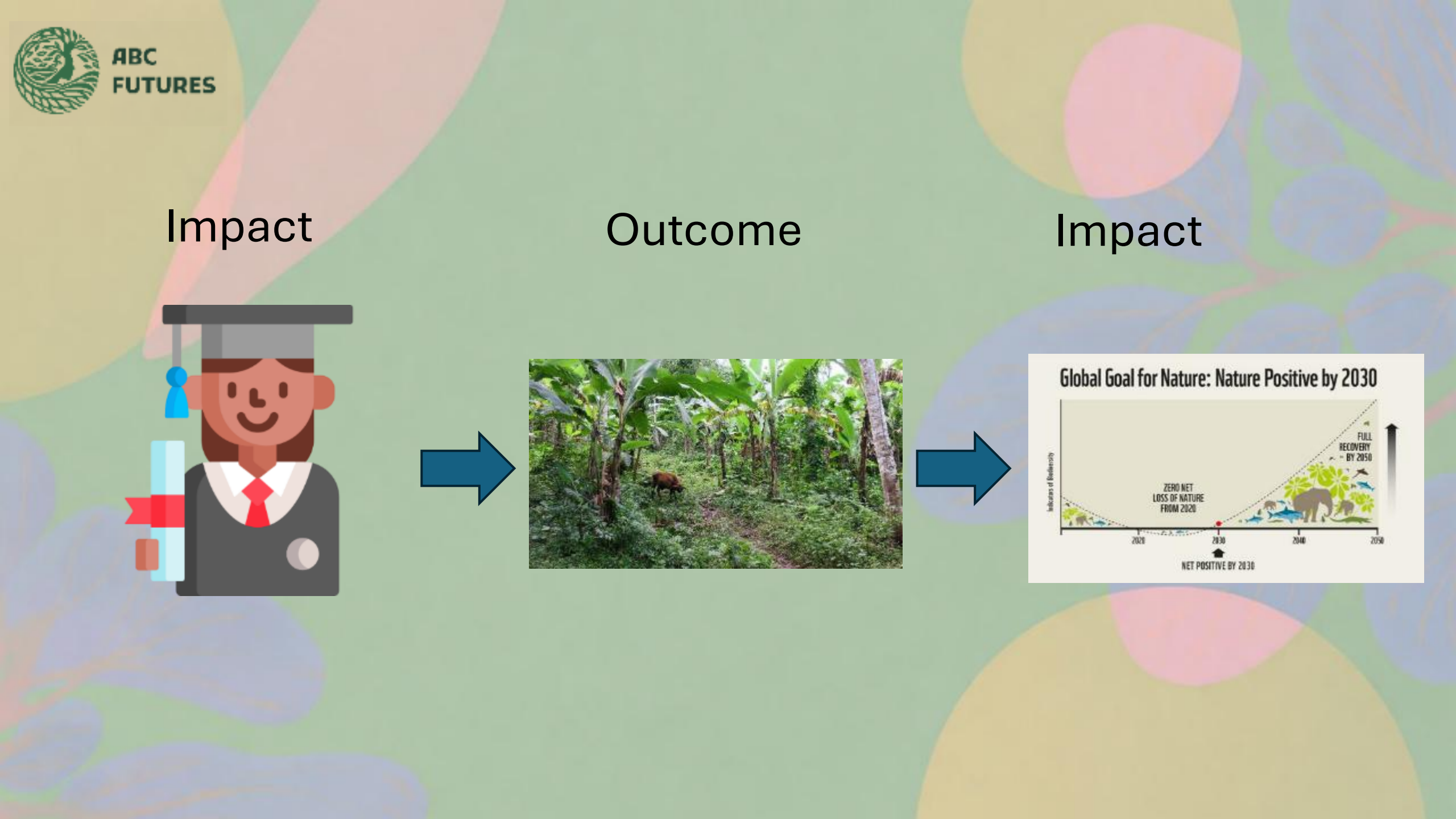
Build new research and learning collaboratives with all students and partner organisations.



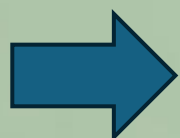
- **Locally grounded** research on locally relevant and perceived issues,

**Building capacity** in conservation through research,

**Creating supportive partnerships** in conservation and research.



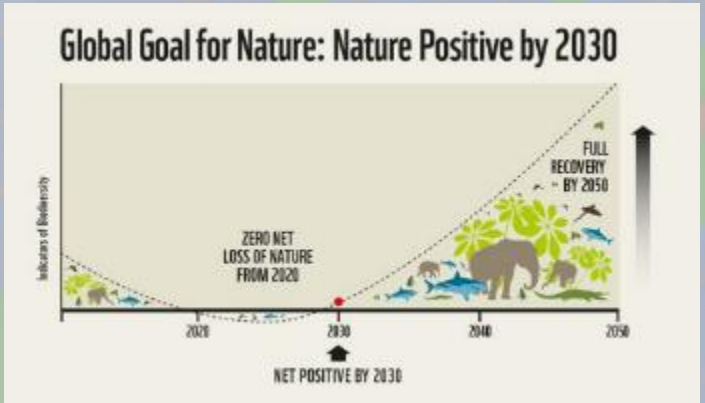
Impact



Outcome



Impact





Thank You

Abcfutures.org

