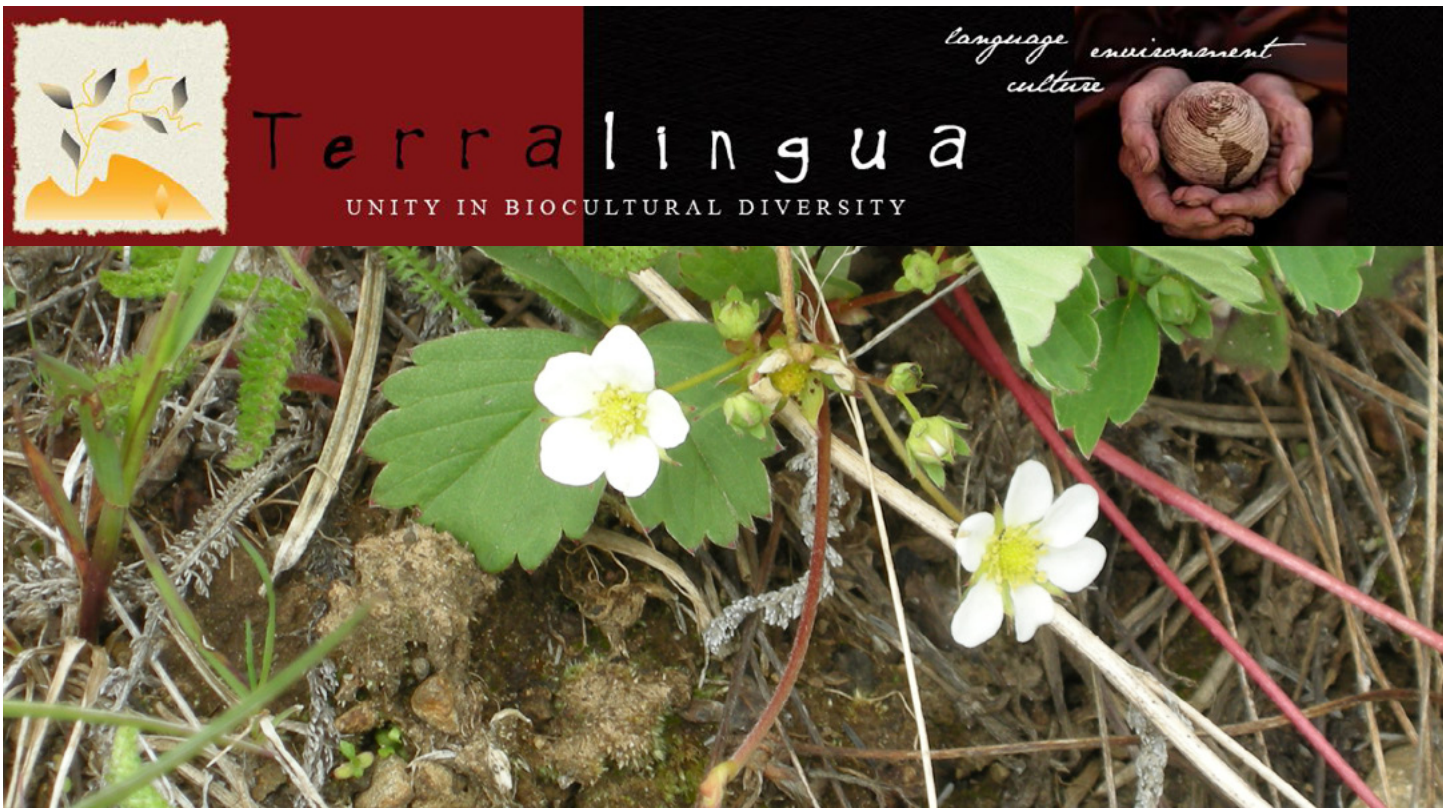




Terralingua

Annual Report 2012





"I often reflected on my ancestral culture and the differences in my own life. The depth of knowledge and the absolute fluency my mother had with the language were exceptionally rich. In my mind, she truly had the best education in the world. The education passed down by Tsilhqot'in ancestors is based on systematic observations of the environment. The people had access to the most efficient laboratory: intact and virtually untouched nature and specialized guides from the universe. The inherited traditions have been time-tested and re-experienced time and time again from generation to generation."

-Tsilhqot'in linguist Linda Smith

Salt Spring Island, January 2013

Dear Terralingua Members and Friends,

There are moments in our work at Terralingua so rewarding as to make us feel that it's all been truly worth the effort.

As I look back at 2012, I'm happy to say there were quite a few of those gratifying occasions. Yet, two stand out in my mind as really poignant and unforgettable times:

- The moment we glimpsed the pre-publication copy of *"Story of the Bear and the Raven"*, the first of four gorgeously illustrated storybooks produced by the amazing *Saanich Language Apprentices* at the Saanich Tribal School, as a part of their "Bringing Our Stories Back" project.
- And the moment we delved into *Tsilhqot'in linguist Linda Smith's* deeply moving *"Nabas Oral Literature Documentation"* report on her work documenting her people's oral traditions about an area of their territory, Nabas, that has long been threatened by an unwanted and highly destructive mining development.

Both of these remarkable projects were supported last year by Terralingua's *Voices of the Earth*. Through this initiative (launched in 2011 with initial funding from the Firebird Foundation), we aim to foster the

Director

Luisa Maffi

Board of Governors:

E. Annamalai, Interim Chair
George Appell, Vice Chair
Susan Fassberg, Secretary/Treasurer
Jessica Brown, At Large
Christopher Dunn, At Large
Cristina Goettsch Mittermeier, At Large

Collaborators:

David Harmon
Jonathan Loh
Stanford Zent
Jen Hegarty
Carla Paciotto
Ellen Woodley
Ortixia Dilts



Photo left: *Voices of the Earth- Tsilhqot'in. Wild strawberries. Photo by Luisa Maffi.* Photo above: *Voices of the Earth- Zanzibar. Planning the film. Photo, Mwambao Network.*

efforts of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to protect and maintain their cultural and linguistic heritage, through the documentation of their place-based oral traditions and by ensuring that those traditions are transmitted to the younger generations. This work also serves to strengthen their community-led educational programs, and provides supporting materials for the defense of their land, resource, and cultural rights. It was all the more thrilling to see the initial results of both projects, knowing that these outcomes not only will enrich the invaluable cultural heritage of these two resilient First Nations, but also will be put to practical use in language and culture revitalization efforts and in Title and Rights cases.

Half way around the globe from where the Saanich and Tsilhqot'in are located in British Columbia, Canada, *Voices of the Earth* also contributed to the making of a [*participatory community video by Swahili communities in Zanzibar*](#) (Tanzania). In the video, elders from this historic East African archipelago talked about the cultural and spiritual traditions related to their sacred groves and caves. And they expressed alarm for how both the sacred sites and the oral traditions are increasingly threatened by encroaching development, mass tourism, and the breakdown of intergenerational transmission of ancestral values and practices. The video was part of a concerted effort by community members, in partnership with both local and international organizations, to protect their sacred sites and revive the traditional knowledge, beliefs, ceremonies, and management practices that once sustained these bioculturally rich sites.

Uplifting as all this work has been, it is only the beginning for *Voices of the Earth*! There is so much more to do—in these and hundreds of other indigenous and local communities around the world—to support the continuity

of cultural and linguistic traditions and their inextricable link to place, identity, and human rights. We are continuing to work on this Terralingua initiative in 2013, and over time hope to expand it to other Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities worldwide.

While our work with *Voices of the Earth* kept us connected to and in tune with realities on the ground, in 2012 we also kept busy in another realm that is central to our mission: education. We firmly believe that positive change comes through meaningful experience, and that to create opportunities for such meaningful experience is the role of education at its best. That's why we started our [*Biocultural Diversity Education Initiative*](#) (BCDEI) in 2011 (with support from the Berman Foundation). Our goal with the BCDEI is to create innovative, thoughtful, and authentic curriculum materials for high schools—materials that rely not only on cutting-edge research to highlight and demonstrate the inextricable link between people and nature, but also on meaningful experience to introduce a wholly new biocultural approach to education. This approach is meant to foster global citizenship and to help re-connect youth with nature—in an effort to combat what has been called the “nature deficit syndrome” affecting young people in our increasingly urban, wired, virtual world.

Last year, we completed the revision of our pilot materials (prepared by Jen Hegarty with pedagogical advice from Ed. Prof. Carla Paciottio). Based on feedback from two collaborating schools that had agreed to test the initial materials, we developed a *Biocultural Diversity Module*—a 10-lesson “primer” on the idea of biocultural diversity, its real-world significance, and why it matters for the future of life. The module was again tested in the two schools, where it was very positively received. This initial experience prompted us to develop a new, comprehensive plan for the



Photograph: Stanford Zent, VITEK Pilot Project, Venuzuela.

BCDEI. In the full-fledged version of the curriculum, we will move on from the “basics” of biocultural diversity to delve into the nature of the links between language, traditional knowledge, and the environment; explore the meaning of “sense of place” and its role in connecting people and nature; identify the factors responsible for the loss of biocultural diversity globally, and the indigenous and other innovative solutions to counter this loss; and reflect on how a biocultural approach can help address our global predicament, and what students can do to take positive action in the world.

What’s most exciting about this new BCDEI plan is that our “*meaningful experience*” approach allows us to join together many threads of our work and bring them to bear on curriculum creation. In particular, we aim to—literally—let the “voices of the earth” speak through the curriculum: that is, the voices of our partners in the Voices of the Earth initiative, as well as the voices of dozens of other extraordinary partners, colleagues, and community friends in our tried-and-tested global network. By working with them to develop curriculum materials, we will ensure that the materials eloquently convey the real-world authenticity of the issues, and the urgency of sustaining biocultural diversity for the future of humankind and all other species.

We’re already off for a good start in 2013. As I write this, we’re about to undertake the first of these meaningful collaborations. It’s a joy and a privilege to be able to envision and realize work like this, which we hope will have a transformative role for youth, our citizens of tomorrow!

And our educational efforts go well beyond school walls, into the larger world. Our newest project, the *Biocultural Diversity Toolkit* (supported by the Swift Foundation), aims to produce a practical guide to biocultural diversity (the concept and the approach) in the guise of a set of easy-to-read, well illustrated, and informative booklets in

both print and electronic form. The Toolkit is meant for a variety of users: a broad audience of college students, professionals, on-the-ground practitioners, indigenous and local community members, policy makers, media, and the general public. Drawing from various aspects of our work, the Toolkit will introduce biocultural diversity and show its relevance for cultural survival, environmental conservation, and sustainable development. It will also present some of the tools we have developed to visualize the global patterns of biocultural diversity (*our biocultural diversity maps*) and to assess the state and trends of the world’s languages (our *Index of Linguistic Diversity*, or ILD) and traditional knowledge (our *Vitality Index of Traditional Environmental Knowledge*, or VITEK). As well, one of the booklets will be devoted to the importance of, and good practices for, documenting and passing on place-based oral traditions.

Last year, we developed the first of these Toolkit booklets (“*VITEK: Vitality Index of Traditional Environmental Knowledge*”), in conjunction with our participation in the 5th World Conservation Congress, which was held in South Korea in September 2012. We distributed the booklet



Photograph: Stanford Zent, VITEK Pilot Project, Venuzuela.



Umsobomvu (the rosy face of the morning). The time when the sky pales or assumes a pink colour with the coming of the sun. Photo: Tony Dold, 2012. Taken from Langscape, Volume 2, Issue 10.

and other background materials to the participants in our “Conservation Campus” devoted to the VITEK—what the VITEK is and how it works to tell us about the permanence, loss, or revitalization of traditional knowledge. The day-long workshop, led by VITEK creator Dr. Stanford Zent, attracted significant attention for its potential usefulness to communities, researchers, and policy makers. A number of international organizations (including the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership), as well as indigenous organizations, have shown interest in the VITEK. The VITEK has also been applied in several field studies, including Dr. Zent’s own pilot studies in Venezuela, and has been presented at meetings concerning indicators relevant to Indigenous Peoples.

By making the VITEK better known in these various contexts, we aim to contribute to highlighting the importance of keeping traditional environmental knowledge strong as part of the invaluable heritage of humanity, and as a source of hope for a more sustainable future.

Our *[Index of Linguistic Diversity](#)* was also in the news

last year. The ILD was chosen for inclusion in the “Aichi Passport”, along with other indicators relevant to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)’s Aichi Targets for reducing the loss of biodiversity. The “Passport”, an iPhone app developed by the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP), was launched at the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, held in India in October 2012. Terralingua is one of the BIP partners, and both the ILD and the VITEK are now also featured on the BIP’s website. The ILD, developed by Dave Harmon and Jonathan Loh, tracks changes in numbers of mother-tongue speakers of the world’s languages over time. The first tool of its kind, the ILD addresses, in a rigorous way, the crucial question: “What is really happening with the world’s languages?”

By providing answers to that question, the ILD calls attention to the loss of linguistic diversity and to the need to put energy and effort into language revitalization. Our work to further develop and improve the ILD database is ongoing, and so is our research to compare and connect the trends in the vitality of the world’s languages with the trends in the health of the planet.

Last but not least, an update on our publications. The most exciting news last year was the production of the

first print issue of our magazine *Langscape* (which all of you received in electronic form). This issue (*Langscape* Vol. 2 No. 11, Summer 2012), devoted to “Sacred Natural Sites: Sources of Biocultural Diversity”, was co-produced with the Sacred Natural Sites Initiative (SNSI), guest-edited by SNSI’s Bas Verschuuren and Robert Wild, designed and developed by *Langscape* editor extraordinaire Ortixia Dilts. Packed with articles and stories from all over the world, and gorgeously illustrated, it was printed through a sponsorship from SNSI. It was distributed widely (and widely appreciated!) at the World Conservation Congress and the Conference of the Parties of the CBD. The previous 2012 issue of the magazine, (Vol. 2 No. 10), on the topic of “Breaking the Language Barrier: a Biocultural Approach to Documenting Oral Literature”, had broken all earlier *Langscape* readership records.

We have two more cutting-edge issues of the magazine in the pipeline for 2013, and plans are afoot for the further development of *Langscape* as the flagship voice of biocultural diversity. Stay tuned!

As well, two years after coming out in print, our book *Biocultural Diversity Conservation: A Global Sourcebook* (Luisa Maffi and Ellen Woodley, Earthscan 2010) has continued to garner positive reviews and to be widely read and used in university classrooms around the world. We see that as another sign that the idea of biocultural diversity, which was at best quaint if not totally obscure when we began to propose it fifteen years ago, is taking hold in many domains—and hopefully penetrating into public consciousness.

What also bodes well from that perspective is that more foundations and donors are coming on board to make biocultural diversity work possible. In addition to renewed funding from our long-time supporter, The Christensen Fund, last year we were fortunate enough to receive new grants from the Swift Foundation, the Berman Foundation, and the Kalliopeia Foundation. I want to gratefully acknowledge all of these generous supporters.

And I want to thank all of you who renewed your support for Terralingua in 2012, or joined our network last year and donated for the first time. We always welcome your contributions, and are working as we speak to make it ever easier to become members and donate online. If you feel inspired to support our work in 2013, you can go to our secure [*DonateNow*](#) page. You can give for general operations, or choose to earmark your donation for any of our projects.

Last year, one member even surprised and humbled us by making Terralingua the designated beneficiary of her retirement savings. It was a logical and easy decision for her to make, she said, and she hopes her action “will inspire others to do the same, or to realize that doing so is a viable possibility”. Thank you, Jeanine, what an amazing show of confidence and trust in what we do!

2013 promises to be another activity-filled year, and we look forward to keeping you updated through our periodic e-news. With you as members of our network, we feel that our energy and our reach are multiplied manifold. That is the power of working together!

Imagine. Sustaining biocultural diversity, the true web of life. Together, we can!

With warm regards, and best wishes for a healthy and fruitful 2013,



Luisa Maffi, Ph.D.

Co-founder/Director

Terralingua

Terralingua is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization registered under U.S.A. tax laws (38-3291259), and a registered charitable organization in Canada (#85590 3266 RR0001)

217 Baker Rd., Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2N6, Canada

Telephone: 250.538.0939 Email contact: members@terralingua.org

www.terralingua.org

Terralingua Donors

Over the years, we have been fortunate to receive the support of many foundations, organizations, and individual donors who share Terralingua's mission. Here we want to directly acknowledge as many of them as possible. But our heartfelt thanks go to all of them, whether their names appear here or not!

50,000 and above

The Christensen Fund
Estate of Aldon N. Roat
Ford Foundation
The Firebird Foundation

10,000 and above

Berman Foundation
Kalliopeia Foundation
Swift Foundation
George N. Appell
David Rapport (In-Kind)
International Development
Research Centre

1,000 and above

Luisa Maffi
New England Biolabs Foundation
Carla Paciotta (In-Kind)
Allan Chinen
Justin Nolan
OGIFA

500 and above

Anonymous
Marcello Buiatti
Kent Walter Jewell
Alan & Charity McNabb

100 and above

Charles Siegel
Claude Sourzac
Dennis Smith
Molly Lee
Richard Thoman, Jr
Michael Krauss
Nita Moore
Garland D. Bills
Glenn Aparicio Parry (*in memory of Moonhawk Alford*)
Gene Anderson
Lenora A. Timm
Bernd S. Müller
Michael Johnson
Máire Mullaney
Rhoda Simmons
Larry M. Jones
Peter Mühlhäusler
Joshua Fishman
Anna Margareta
Ritamäki-Sjöstrand
Andrew Carothers
Sarah Lanning
Nancy C. Dorian
Christian R. Vogl
Catherine Baumgartner
Stephen Matthews
Olympia Terral S
tephen Tobias & Alice
Webber (*in memory of Mary Haas*)
E. James Lieberman

Matthew Goldberg

Iliana Reyes
Angus Parker
Jocelyn Graf
Kenneth Samela
Nathaniel Warehime
Andrew Currie
Jeanine Pfeiffer
Dan F. Orcherton
Diana Gonzalez
Brent Berlin
Claudia Brugman
Joan Doria
Nyr Indictor
Roy Iutzi-Mitchell
Ole-Henrik Magga
Gary J. Martin
Tyler John Sterkel
Kierán Suckling
Antonio Teixeira
Edward C. (Ted) Wolf
Juanita Bason (*on behalf of Professor Holmes*)
Jonathan Pool

50 and above

Edward Fowler Tuttle
Winifred McLaughlin
Anne Fitzgerald
Larry Rosenwald
John P. Clark
Peter van Baarle
Maria Pina Egidi
James L. Armagost
Erica Bigio

Johanna Silverthorne

Sean Duke
Meryl McQueen
Dewi Evans
Margaret Florey
Robert Brian Levy
Linda Lanz
Philippe Vigny
Steven Iverson
Stephen Houston
Barbara Tomassini
Federico D. Cross
R. Alan Hedley
Kelly Poe
Sheila Reid
Gordon Ross
Warren E. Heck
Jeffrey Matthews
Jon Reyhner
Grace Fielder
David Chambers (*on behalf of Whittaker Chambers*)
Agnes Chavez (*on behalf of Journey with Sube*)
Deborah Hirsch Bezanis
Jonathan Miller
Christopher Dunn
James Wilce
Yi Ya Yin
Seonaigh Mac Pherson

Sources and Uses of Funds 2012

This is how your donations contribute to our income and to our operations.

