

# Terralingua Annual Report 2014



**Unity in Biocultural Diversity**



## Salt Spring Island, April 2015



*Dear Terralingua Friends and Supporters,*

*As I started writing these notes, it was only a few days since Cyclone Pam tore its way with devastating force through the Pacific island nation of Vanuatu. When disasters like this hit, it's natural to focus on immediate emergency needs: water, food, shelter, medical help, rebuilding infrastructure. And it's perhaps easy to forget that there is another kind of tragic aftermath that the fury of the elements leaves behind: damage to the magnificent yet fragile web of life in nature and culture that is biocultural diversity.*

*The cyclone that swept through Vanuatu caused tremendous damage to both people and nature in this hotbed of linguistic diversity – with over 100 different languages spoken by a population of about 250,000, the country with the highest rate of per-capita linguist diversity in the world. For years, committed people in Vanuatu have been working hard to maintain and revitalize their diverse cultural traditions and traditional knowledge systems through a budding grassroots “biocultural diversity movement”. Biocultural revival is a crucial process – a rebuilding of that interdependence between humans and the environment that is key to the future of life on earth. A disaster of such proportions can be a huge setback for that process too.*

*That is why, wherever we are, if we care for our common future, we must keep doing all we can to support the persistence and resurgence of the biocultural diversity of life. At Terralingua, that has been our mission for almost twenty years now. We've pursued it passionately through research and international policy, and these days we continue to pursue it no less passionately through education and outreach projects as well. Here's to bring you up to date on our efforts over the past year.*

*On behalf of us all at Terralingua, I want to thank you once more for your support of our mission, and for all you do to promote the idea of biocultural diversity and to put it into practice in everyday life. We look forward to continuing to work with you to forge a path toward a bioculturally rich and thriving future for all people and all of life.*

*With warmest regards,*

Luisa Maffi, Ph.D  
Terralingua Co-founder and Director

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Luisa Maffi

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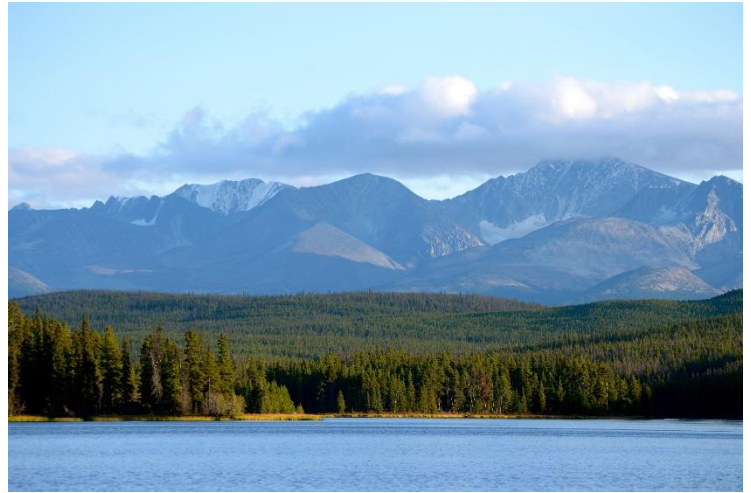
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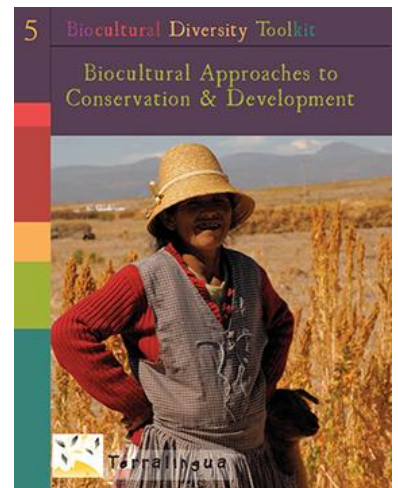


In 2014, we continued collaborating with some of our Indigenous partners in [Voices of the Earth](#), our project to support the maintenance and revitalization of oral traditions. The Tsilhqot'in First Nation of south-central British Columbia, Canada, with whom we have worked for the past few years, succeeded in their opposition to a gold mining project that would have devastated a significant portion of their territory. Oral history gathered with Terralingua's support contributed to establishing the cultural and spiritual values of this area, which led to the ultimate rejection of the mining project. Later last year, the Tsilhqot'in also won a major victory in Canada's Supreme Court. For the first time in Canadian history, the Court affirmed Tsilhqot'in title to a portion of their unceded traditional territory.



In October, the Tsilhqot'in held a ceremony at Fish Lake, the site of the now defunct mining project, to celebrate these victories and declare a Tribal Park. I was invited to partake in the ceremony, during which a stunning totem carved and donated by the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nation of coastal British Columbia was erected to mark the Tribal Park. I also participated in a unique pack-hoarse trip led by a Tsilhqot'in elder, retracing one of the ancestral trails once used by Tsilhqot'in to move across the land, according to their traditional semi-nomadic way of life. Both events taught me a lot, not only about Tsilhqot'in culture, but also about the many challenges that remain to protect their lands and to create livelihoods that are both sustainable and build on Tsilhqot'in ancestral traditions. These reflections will inspire future [Voices of the Earth](#) work we hope to do with the Tsilhqot'in and other Indigenous partners.

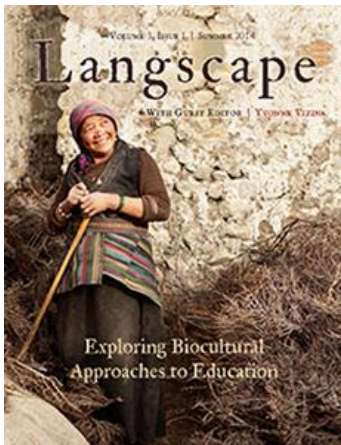
Last year we also completed preparation of the series of e-booklets that comprise our [Biocultural Diversity Toolkit](#), which was supported by the Swift Foundation. The Toolkit aims to introduce biocultural diversity and relevant approaches and tools to a broad audience of researchers, practitioners, and the general public. Each volume includes introductory articles, conceptual and methodological pieces, and case studies, presented in a handsome and user-friendly format. The material was based both on Terralingua's own work and on collaborations with colleagues from all over the world. The volumes are now posted on our [Biocultural Diversity Conservation Portal](#). Please visit the Portal to download and peruse the Toolkit volumes. I hope you find them instructive and useful, and please share them with others, too!



In other project news, we are wrapping up the present phase of the [Biocultural Diversity Education Initiative](#) (BCDEI), which has been supported by the Berman Foundation. The goal of the BCDEI is to introduce the idea and relevance of biocultural diversity to high school teachers and students, illustrating the links between biological and cultural diversity and between language and traditional environmental knowledge through real-life examples. We prepared [an overview and other introductory materials](#) for teachers, and are completing three initial curriculum lessons: an introduction to biocultural diversity and two case studies, one on the Andamanese people of India, and one on the Xhosa people of South Africa. Once all the materials are ready and available on the BCDEI site, we'll start disseminating them among teachers and educators for testing. The feedback we receive will guide further BCDEI work. In collaboration with people in our worldwide network, we hope to create many more lessons centred around inspiring examples of biocultural diversity from communities around the globe. Contact me with your ideas and suggestions!



An Overview of a New Approach to Education and Curriculum Development



In conjunction with this education project, we devoted an issue of our magazine *Langscape* (Summer 2014) to the topic of “Biocultural Approaches to Education.” Guest-edited by Yvonne Vizina, a First Nations education expert, this *Langscape* issue features thought-provoking pieces and on-the-ground examples of biocultural approaches to teaching and learning. It makes for a fascinating read, and we believe it will form a valuable complement to the educational materials we are getting ready to disseminate.

As you know, *Langscape* is now a benefit of [Terralingua membership](#), available to members as a downloadable PDF. We are deeply grateful to those of you who have chosen to show your support for Terralingua’s mission and goals by becoming members. *Langscape* is an important extension of the voice of Terralingua, through which we seek to promote greater understanding and appreciation of the value of biocultural diversity. It is a veritable labour of love, but it also represents a major effort for a small organization like ours. We know that all of you have appreciated the magazine in the past. Your support is crucial for us to be able to continue and expand this effort. We’re already at work on the next issue, which is shaping up to be another rich and interesting one. We hope that many more of you will choose to become members, knowing that by so doing, you’ll keep *Langscape* coming and make the voice of biocultural diversity heard more widely.

PDFs of past issues of the magazine (Vol. 2) are still downloadable for free from the [archives page](#) of the *Langscape* site. Print versions of previous and current issues, as well as PDFs of current issues (Vol 3. and beyond), are available to anyone for purchase from our [Market](#). You also have an option to purchase a yearly print subscription, without becoming a member. Membership entitles you to other benefits in addition to *Langscape*, including access to the “Members Only” zone on our membership site, [Terralingua Ubuntu](#), and to our Biocultural Diversity Forum, as well as discounts on our books and print magazine.

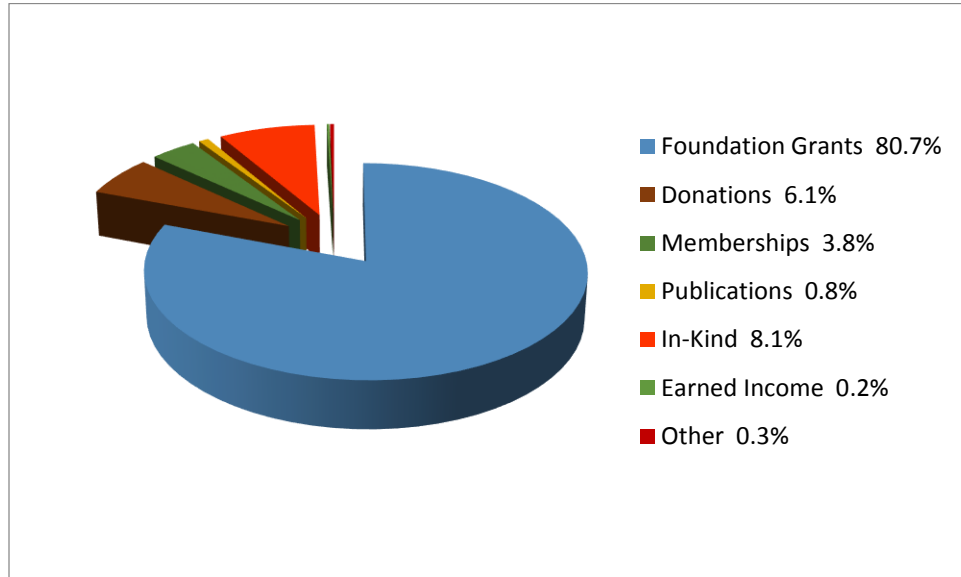


***Unity in Biocultural Diversity: Together We Can!***

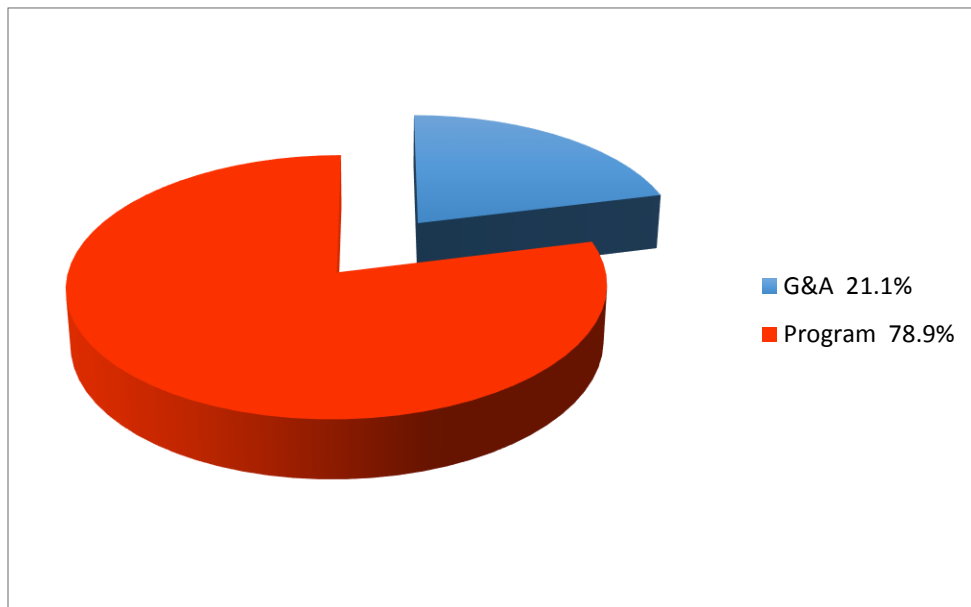


## Sources and Uses of Funds

### Income



### Expenses



## Terralingua Supporters

Over the years, we have been fortunate to receive the support of many foundations, organizations, and individuals who share Terralingua's mission and goals. Here we want to directly acknowledge as many of you as possible. But our heartfelt thanks go to all of you, whether your names appear on this list or not!

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