



# Wild foods as cultural heritage and cultural ecosystem services in Indigenous Food Systems

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- Wild foods are not only healthy nutritious options, they are also cultural important, providing:
  - Cultural ecosystem service
  - Intangible cultural heritage
- Harvesting wild food is linked to attachment to place and thus cultural identity (Richmond et al. 2005; Loring and Gerlach 2009; Urquhart and Acott 2014).





East Usambara Mountains, Tanzania

Kyle Powys Whyte and other Indigenous scholars and activities note that:

*Indigenous relationships with ecosystems, places, and all species are an interwoven set of responsibilities that foster the collective continuance of all species, including people.*





Gumuz woman collecting bamboo shoots, Ethiopia

## The Gumuz people of Ethiopia:

- Unlike most other communities in Ethiopia, consume a lot of wild foods (e.g. bamboo shoots)
- Locally preferred traditional lablab bean thrives in shifting cultivation, now discouraged/ banned
- Hunting, although illegal, remains common in west Ethiopia (Erena et al. 2020). High rates of livestock disease and low access to extension services, mean loss of wild could have sig. implications





*Emilina, with fishing pole, sago palms in background, Papua Province, Indonesia*

## **Indigenous communities of Papua, Indonesia:**

- Traditional diet based on sago and wild fish and meat
- State narratives about “food security” heavily focused on rice, forest land seen as “unproductive”
- Increased production of oil palm in the region has led to influx of non-Indigenous people and greater access to processed foods





- Indigenous and minority communities around the world are vulnerable to policies that are not attentive to the unique aspects of their food systems
- Land-use and conservation policy has, and continues to, infringe of the right to food for many Indigenous communities (Holen 2004; Sylvester et al. 2016, Sunderland 2020; Turner and Curran forthcoming).

Thank You!

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