

# SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH THE EYES OF THE CALAMIAN TAGBANWA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

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## BACKGROUND

The concept of sustainability (*likas-kaya* in Filipino) as an integral part of international development has been around for almost four decades. The complex, contextual, and dynamic nature of this concept makes it an elusive goal despite the many metrics developed to quantify it. The road to sustainability is anchored in sustainable development, which entails development that is mindful of the needs of both present and future generations. But how does this pathway translate to local communities? **This paper brings the conversation on sustainability to local grounds by visualizing it through the eyes of the women and men members of the Calamian Tagbanwa Indigenous Peoples (IPs) community in Calauit Island, Philippines,** who are noted for their strong assertion of their ancestral land and water rights and commitment to sustainability.

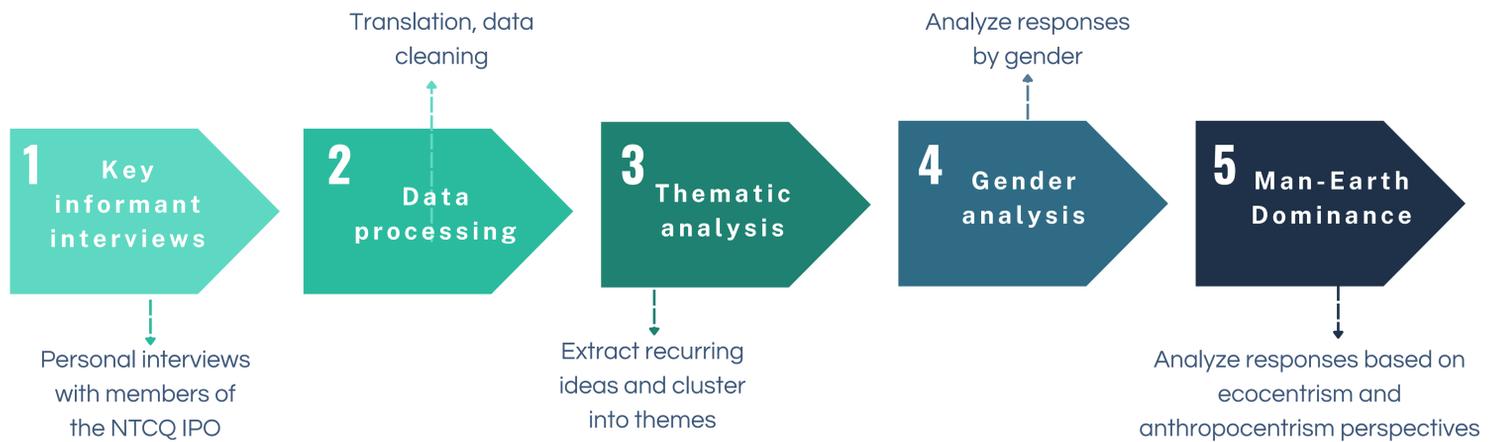
## METHODOLOGY



5 men

4 women

Community leader, Elder, NTCQ IPO employee, reps from Women's group, Fisherfolk's group, Youth



## RESULTS

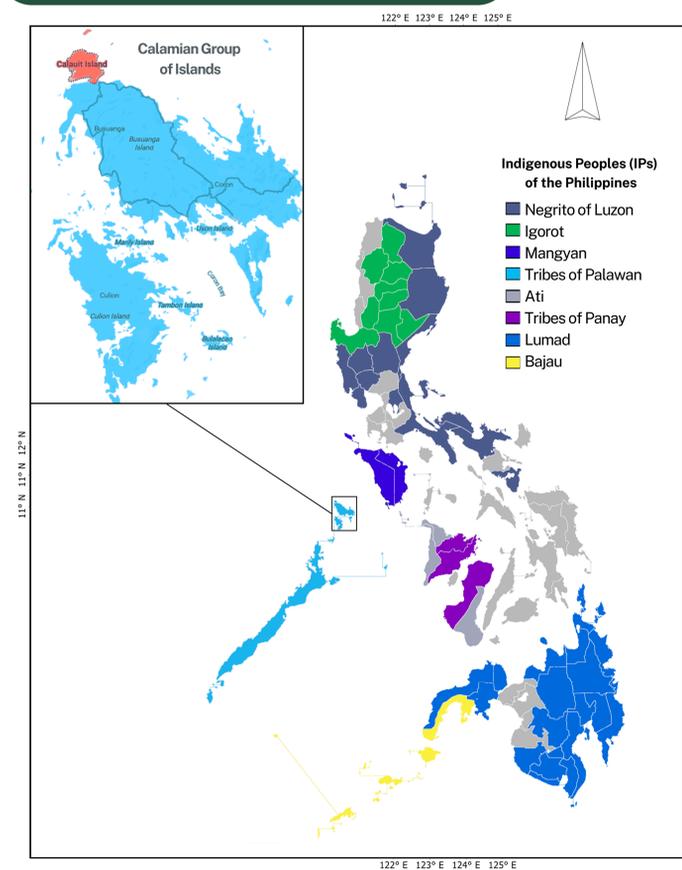


Figure 1. Calauit Island in the Municipality of Busuanga, Province of Palawan, Philippines (Leonida et al. 2025).

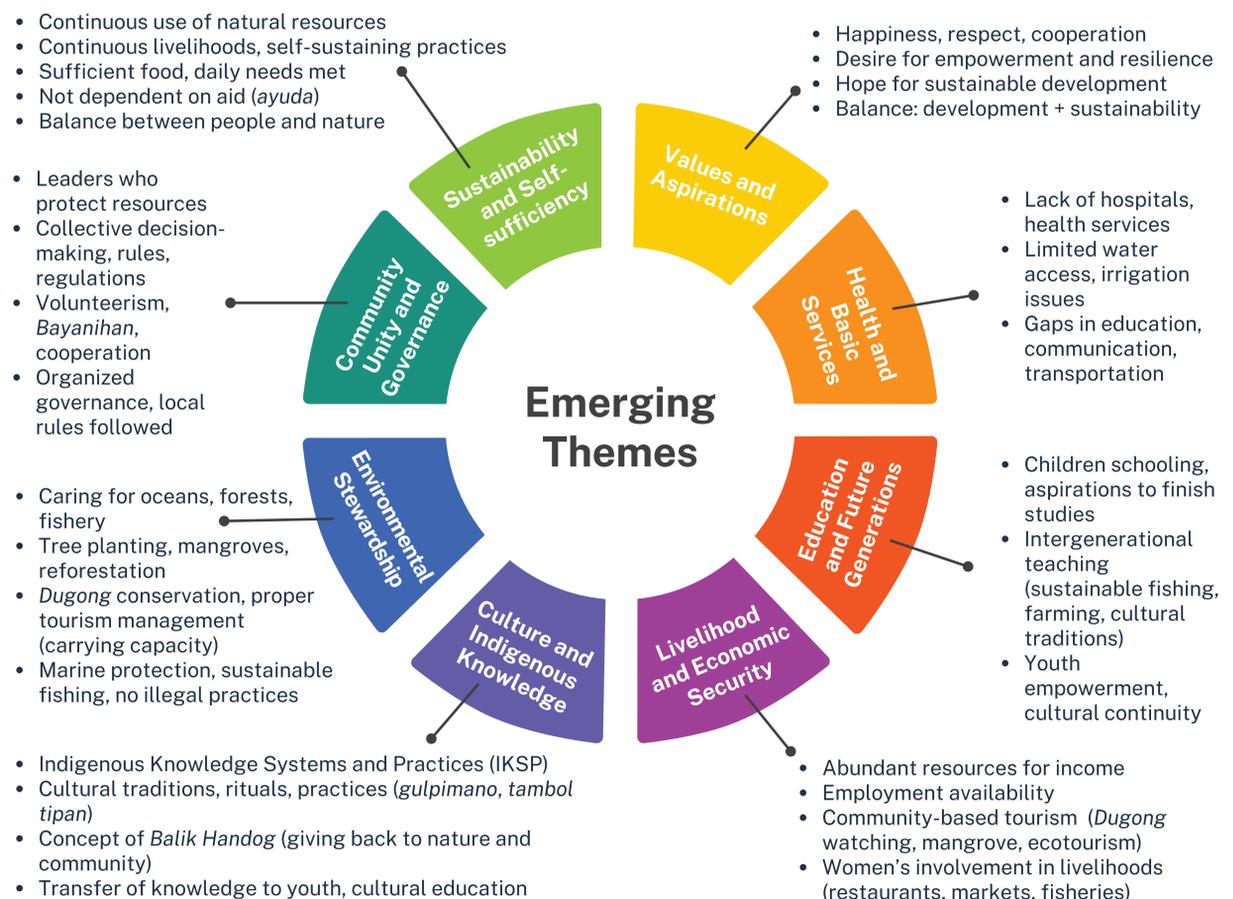


Figure 2. Emerging themes from the responses of key informants.

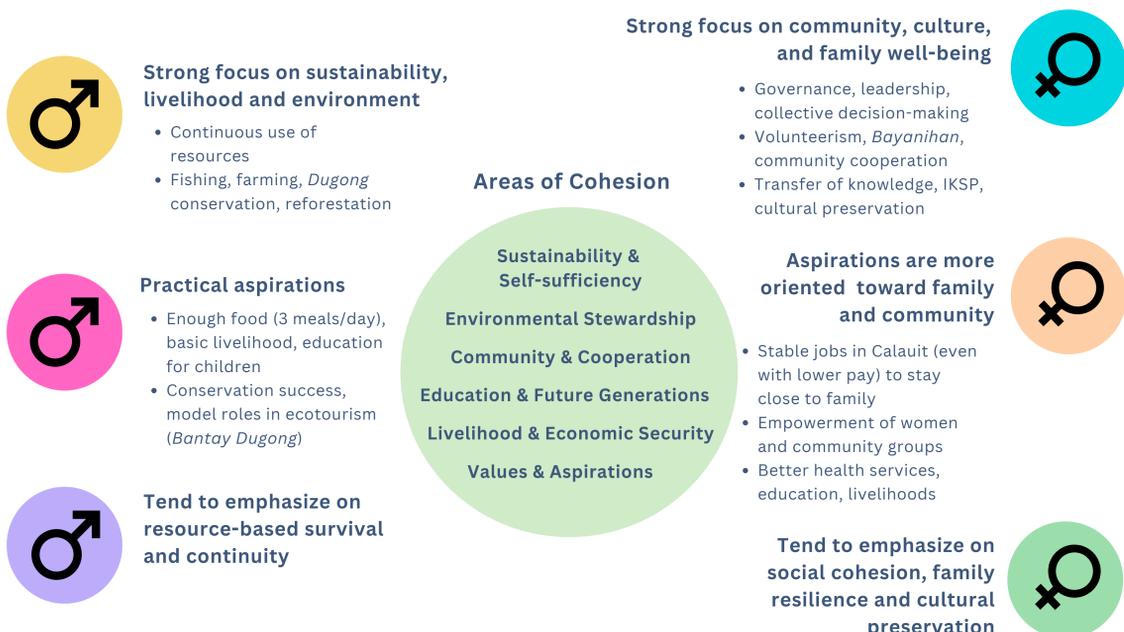


Figure 3. Gender-based responses and areas of cohesion.

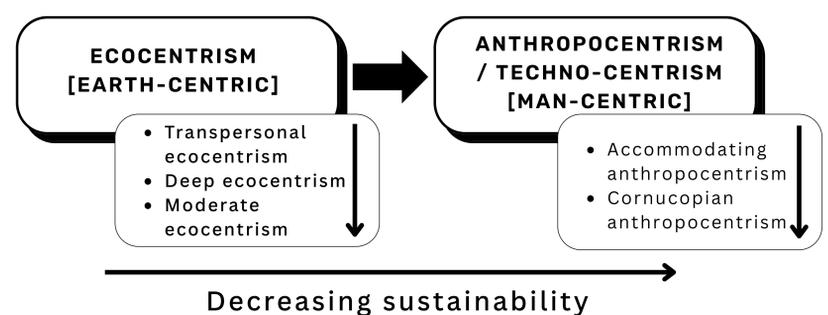


Figure 4. Sustainability interpretations based on Man-Earth Dominance Viewpoint (Mungai et al., 2023).

The Calamian Tagbanwa IPs have a strong leaning towards Ecocentrism viewpoints, with notable characteristics of both deep ecology and moderate ecology, i.e., grounded in environmental and evidence-based concepts of nature and decision-making for the benefit of the community, and certain beliefs and value systems. They also recognize the value of ecosystems and are aware of the natural environment's carrying capacity, as demonstrated by the engagements and measures they take on in their community.

The Calamian Tagbanwa women IPs associate sustainability with social structures (community cooperation, family care, cultural preservation, women's empowerment), while men associate it with direct resource use (fishing, farming, guarding marine species). Cohesion is strongest where resources meet community well-being. Overall, the Tagbanwa IPs show a strong leaning towards Ecocentrism sustainability viewpoints, reflecting strong roots in their tradition of harmonious co-existence with nature.