

Women *of the* Sea

Approaches to the Marine
and Coastal Areas of
Indigenous Peoples



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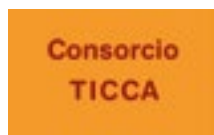
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Lorena Arce, Karina Vargas and Yohana Coñuecar
(Coordinators)



We are grateful to the women who provided their valuable testimonials and who are part of the Indigenous Women Network for the Defense of the Sea, and are in the process of recognition of their collective rights in marine and coastal areas. They and their struggles inspired this document.

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Introduction

In 2008, the promulgation of the law that establishes the ‘Marine and Coastal Areas of Indigenous Peoples’ seemed like an inconceivable achievement. The process for its drafting and approval was epic in terms of Indigenous policy participation and advocacy within the framework of the current institutionalality. As those who were part of the preparation of this law pointed out, it was mathematical and politically impossible for this law to pass through parliament. Thus, against all odds, the law that recognizes the customary uses of Indigenous peoples on the coasts and the sea was approved.

This regulation was elaborated by the Mapuche-Lafkenche people, under the articulation of the Lafkenche Territorial Identity, in response to the growing privatization of the sea, promoted by a fishing law that neither recognized nor respected the rights, uses and customs of the Indigenous peoples—hence which is also known as Lafkenche law. But its creators went even further. Visionaries and with a sense of solidarity towards other Indigenous peoples, they maintained a broad language throughout the text of the law, so that other peoples, such as the Kawésqar, Yaganes, Changos, Diaguitas or Rapa Nui, could also request these areas in their territories if they considered them pertinent.

Since then, this law has been increasingly used by various Indigenous peoples, communities and associations, for the defense of their territorial rights and the protection of marine and coastal areas, which are seen increasingly threatened by exogenous development models, extractivism and pollution. At present, there are more than 100 applications for these areas—also known as Ecmpto for their acronym in Spanish—distributed in seven regions of the country, covering an area of more than 30 thousand km². However, with long processing times that exceed the legal deadlines, currently only about 13% of these requests have reached the end of the process and have signed the respective Use Agreement with the Undersecretariat for Fisheries and

Aquaculture (Subpesca in Spanish) to formalize the administration of the Ecmpto. The political and administrative obstacles started to appear when the scope and impact that this law would have on the reorganization and governance of marine and coastal areas in Chile became evident.

In this scenario, Indigenous women have played a fundamental role, both in the creation of the law as well as in the application and processing of these areas. Likewise, it is estimated that they are the ones who carry out a large part of the customary uses invoked and who play a key role in the transmission of knowledge about the sea and the environment, as gatherers, educators, artisans, vegetable gardeners, caregivers and spiritual guides, and increasingly also as leaders, fisherwomen, divers and owners of boats. Many carry out several of these activities simultaneously, combining them with the care of the children, the family, the home and the community. Still, their contributions are barely recognized and made visible, and their activities and jobs are rarely paid.

Although their participation in these areas is significant, it is still unequal due to the various gender gaps that they must face by being women, Indigenous and from coastal areas often isolated; as well as assuming multiple workloads.

The inequalities they face and the richness of their worldviews have motivated the preparation of this book. We have wanted to highlight their voices and perspectives about the sea; their ways of inhabiting the coastal area through the intrinsic connection that they keep with the care of the sea; as well as their perspectives on the implementation of this law that they invoke as a strategy for the protection of their territories of life.

For this, we interviewed and collected the testimony of ten women from different territories: Pérsida Cheuquenao, Mapuche-Lafkenche from Teodoro Schmidt; Patricia Avendaño, Mapuche-Huilliche from Caulín; Ingrid White Llancañani, Mapuche-Huilliche from Pichicolo; Rocío Colivoro, Mapuche-Huilliche from Yaldad; Pamela Zúñiga, Mapuche-Huilliche from Quinchao; Ingrid Echeverría, Mapuche-Huilliche from Barra de Chaiguao; Euvina Leutún, Mapuche-Huilliche from Llancahué; Mirtha White, Mapuche-Huilliche from Pichicolo; María Luisa Muñoz, Yagán from Bahía Mejillones; Leticia Caro, Kawésqar from Magallanes. It should be noted that this selection did not seek representativeness but to show a diversity of voices from different roles and trades.

The book has been written based on their testimonies. We start with their worldviews or ways of seeing and interpreting the world and its marine territories. We continue by focusing on their reflections and perspectives about the Ecmpto, the importance that these areas have for them, the customary roles and uses that they exercise there, their main contributions and the difficulties they face in their daily lives. Related to the latter, we dedicate a special section to the gaps found for their active participation and the strategies they have been developing to face them. Finally, we present some of their reflections on the continuity in the protection and defense of the sea, the generational transfer and the roles and challenges the youth face in their communities. We conclude with final reflections and some recommendations for the State, the support organizations and Indigenous communities and organizations.

In the second part of this book, we get closer to the life history of each one of them, through a brief presentation based on the testimonials they provided. Their stories are accompanied by an illustration that seeks to present them in another language, with the elements and places with which they identify, under the interpretation and gaze of other ten women illustrators.

We hope that this work inspires and motivates you to continue listening and delving deeper into the views and perspectives of women on the sea and marine and coastal areas of the Indigenous peoples. Also, to amplify the voices of many other women who are contributing every day, without support or recognition to sustain their cultures, knowledge and all forms of life in their territories. They and their struggles are the motivation of this work.

Lorena Arce and Karina Vargas
Observatorio Ciudadano



Part I

Views and perspectives
on the sea and the
marine and coastal areas



Territorialities and worldviews of the peoples of the sea

The Indigenous peoples of the sea inhabit the coastal areas: islands, archipelagos and channels throughout Chile; among them are the Chango, Rapa Nui, Mapuche (Lafkenche, Huilliche), Kawésqar and Yagán. They are peoples whose territory, culture, worldview, and spirituality are closely linked to the sea:

I think that is what ultimately happens to all Indigenous peoples who are connected to the sea. Because although there are others who are connected with nature, with the trees and something else, the Indigenous peoples who have a direct connection to the sea, the Indigenous people who share their life on the coastal area, have that, and it is an intrinsic connection, which cannot be cut. *Leticia Caro.*

From which they obtain their main livelihoods:

The sea is very valuable, because someone works and gets the food for life sustenance, which is shellfish and fish, and all other resources too. And that's why it has great significance and importance. Because one's life is nourished by the sea, one can say. *Eduvina Leutún.*

The sea is the main means of connectivity for the Indigenous peoples who inhabit coastal areas, despite the various transformations that have taken place in their territories:

The only thing I can highlight is that for the Kawésqar people the most important thing is the sea. The sea has an ancestral importance, precisely because nomadism in this territory occurs through the sea, since ancient times. The transition between one territory and another is by the sea, by canoes, by boats. It would be impossible to travel through the *Kawésqar Waes* [Kawésqar territory] on a road because it is an area where there are at least 40 thousand islands, we would have to put 40 thousand bridges to be able to move in another way. However, currently, part of that transit is

terrestrial due to the transformations and changes that have been imposed, in this case, by the State, the systems, where in addition many routes have been closed to us, but we also access on foot, by bus or however we go so as not to lose connection with the territory. *Leticia Caro*.

Despite their pre-existence and historical importance in those areas, peoples' link with the sea and their rights over their territories and coastal areas have not been recognized:

The link with the sea, of those of us who live here, was not really lost. Being constantly linked to the sea, in our case, was through artisanal fishing. In the case of Francisco [husband], who also comes from ancestral family, in the sense of being connected to the sea, navigate, have that possibility, because you still have to understand that many could not continue due to restrictions in the territory, either by the same institutions, but somehow, some people have been connecting and that has been our case. [...] And that is something that will never be lost, so in one way or another, although how we connect is transformed, connection has not been lost. *María Luisa Muñoz*.

Like the non-homogeneous territories that they inhabit, the Indigenous peoples linked to the sea also have a diversity of worldviews, contexts, geographies, and historical processes. We find, for example, territories with a great cultural diversity, which is expressed in their clothing, gastronomy and in the products that they use:

Achao is a very diverse territory because each island has many parts, and there are 9 islands. It is a territory of 9 islands, therefore, the people of Achao are nothing without the islands. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays all the boats arrive and it's like everything flourishes, it's full of people, of diversity, each island is different. One still sees the *ñañitas* (sisters, older women) with their headscarves. Now you don't see it so much anymore, but it's been a while since one could see the *ñañitas* who came on bare feet who had various customs, which created a very rich encounter. Achao is the place where all those things, cultures, come together. There is also diversity in food; well, in recent years, the diversity of shellfish and fish has been greatly reduced, but even so, it is still a lot. *Pamela Zúñiga*.

Territories inhabited by nomadic peoples who use large areas in their routes and travels:

The Kawésqar territory is essentially a nomadic territory. Our ancestors traveled large and diverse areas, where today, as part of that great ancestral

territory, we have Ecmpto requests, and our Ecmpto application is framed in three large areas, which are distant from each other, and that is where the nomadic space matters, because, for example, regulations cannot understand that nomadic space and they say “Why so much area and why so distant?” That is why it is important to understand the Kawésqar territory, to know the reason for the request and why the distance between two, or the three territorial areas within the same application. For example, on the one hand, we have that a part of our community moves in the Tawókser area, which is in Punta Arenas, in the Brunswick Peninsula, which connects to the Seno Skyring, and there is a portion of our Ecmpto, and we actively move around and it is part of our journey. The other place is the Almirante Montt Gulf and the Canal de las Montañas, and that is already in the Quelel sector, which today is called Puerto Natales and they are at a distance of 300 kilometers from each other, but we also move there. It is like someone put a city in between those areas and our ancestral territory. But the travels are not interrupted, they continue. And there’s also the Steiner Peninsula, which is much further north of the territory, where we also travel extensively. And nobody believes us, but we go through all those areas, including the community which may be one day away, in Steiner, and we are going to be traveling here in Skyring. *Leticia Caro.*

Territories from which they have been dispossessed and displaced, severing their relationship with the sea, as expressed by Pérsida Cheuquenao—originally from the Marcelo Travol Llanca community from the Porma sector in Teodoro Schimdt—who, along with other Mapuche Lafkenche families, as the land they inhabited was insufficient, opted for a land subsidy and currently live in the Marcelo Travol Llanca II Community in Gorbea, far from the sea:

We have been here for 15 years. We came through a subsidy for land because it was difficult to get a livelihood there; we lived, rented, worked in one place and another, so we finally opted for splitting the community group and that’s how 24 arrived first, then the other 24 and so... The community was always acquiring land subsidies. The community of origin has four subgroups, so, that’s how we’ve been moving and that’s how we arrived here. *Pérsida Cheuquenao.*

And territories that to date are not formally recognized by the State:

The territory where the Indigenous community is placed is a territory that belongs to the marine, which is the seashore. We do not have, for example, title of ownership. [...] And in this context, about six years ago, the Navy wanted to remove all the people in the sector because of the earthquakes. So they were sending people letters telling them they had to get out of the place. This issue did not affect us as a community because we invoked our rights as Indigenous people, the Convention 169, ancestral rights, customary use, and since these are traditional practices that we carry out, they cannot evict us, because it is our own practice. So we didn't have major problems because they have to respect our rights. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Territories that have been facing drastic and increasingly accelerated changes, due to climate change, urban intervention or extractive activity:

Nowadays, here in Pichicolo, what was a realization for me is the life we have here. In 1995 there were the fish farming companies and in the 2010, if I'm not mistaken, they all left. In 1995 I used to go to the beach with my mother—those memories are very vivid for me—and if you went to the beach, you could collect everything. There was a lot of biodiversity on those beaches, Playa Larga as we called them, which is the road to Puntilla Pichicolo. And already in 2011, if I'm not mistaken, in 2010, I lived closer to the beach, I went there, as I was going to look for mussels, but I only found sea snails and some sea urchins. *Mirtha White.*

When the tide goes out, the area is called La Barra because everything is like a hill of sand, stone, a whole area remains dry, which is like a bar. It's not very big, it's not very wide, but yes, it is very long. So in that area people are always going to take pictures, look for shellfish, clams, *luche* (a type of seaweed). Previously there, when there was more abundance—because now the sea is so depleted—I remember that when we were children I would even catch snoeks there, which remained in the pools. Unfortunately, nowadays there are no more. Now you can see seabass, you can see salmon, and what you can't see is horse mackerel. I got to see the last horse mackerel. When there are strong waves below, for example, from south or north, depending on the winds, there are a lot of waves, and as we always went to play on the beach, we were playing and the waves did not stop and a horse mackerel reached the bottom, and since it was a good size, we went and caught it out and ate it. And that was the last one I saw. *Ingrid Echevarría.*



Tamara White, Caleta Pichicolo

An area also inhabited by beings of nature and protective forces with which we share the environment:

My territory has a coastal area that is mainly made up of different beings that make up marine life: seaweeds, fish, crustaceans, mollusks, etc. But it is also composed of the *ngen* (owners or protective forces) that inhabit these territories. I need to highlight the *ngen lafken* (protective forces of the sea), which from the oral stories that have been told to us by our ancestors, are constantly present in this territory. *Ingrid White*.

In the same way, the worldview and spirituality of the Indigenous peoples linked to the sea is essential to sustain the importance and protection of the territory and coastal areas, to define the culture and identity of these peoples, and understand the special relationship they have with these areas.

In this sense, Pésida Cheuquenao explains why for the Mapuche Lafkenche people there is the need of a law that protects the sea and coastal areas inhabited ancestrally by the Indigenous peoples:

And how does this relate to defending the marine area? Because we finished our rogation in the sea, we finished our rogation on the second day in the sea, we do it there on the beach. So we had more reasons to defend the area, see how we control the area. And that was how we talked with many leaders from the management area, representatives, farmers, from all the organizations we were gathering the information, also making the *pichi-keches* [boys and girls], the *machis* [spiritual authorities], the *weichafes* [warriors] participate. We take into account all these people, the traditional authorities, as you call them, we talked with them to tell them that this was happening, that the government was intervening in our communities without taking us into account. What did they think about that? They said: “No, it is not possible, how are they going to take away the sea, how are they going to ban us if it’s our house, how are they going to ban us from arriving there to the sea, if we are going to bathe, we get medicine”, etc., etc., there were many arguments. And thus, many people became aware in that way, and that is how we got that idea that was there, it became a project, and today it is a law. And that law, well, it was not easy, because there were various governments, and the people were also becoming aware of this situation, of the territorial demands, the fundamental rights that must be cared for, protected and everything. Always working with women too, with *ngütamchefe* [bone setters], with all those people who are related to the work we do in the *lafken* [sea]. *Pésida Cheuquenao*.

For this reason, Indigenous peoples make not only a territorial claim of the coastal areas, but also a spiritual claim, because they occupy them for sustenance purposes in a relationship of respect and gratitude, making rogations to strengthen their relationship with the sea and their worldview as a people:

The worldview of the people is essential. That is, if you cannot understand the worldview of our Indigenous people and the history of the Indigenous people here in the Quinchao archipelago, we could not understand what the relevance of the coastal area is. *Pamela Zúñiga*.

Spirituality and worldview that give them the strength to defend these areas, but which at the same time form part of their traditional knowledge because they allow them to understand the reason for carrying out their cultural practices and the ways in which these should be done:

It helped us a lot [defending the sea] because of our *takeche* (elders, ancestors), our people when they die. We, in the *huinca* (non-Mapuche, Western) world, from the Western point of view we say “Let them go to heaven,” right? But as Mapuche we say “*ka mapu ngetuai* (to another world we’re leaving), *nome lafken ngetuai fey tañi am* (to the other side of the sea the soul goes), *fey tati ñi püllü* (our spirit), *nome lafken amuai* (on the other side from the sea it leaves).” Always related to the sea. So if there was a concession, the *huinca* imposition, there would already be a breakdown among us, between our *püllü* [spirit], our *gen* [way of being], *mogen* [way of life], for us as Mapuche *Pérsida Cheuquenao*.

An aspect that from the Western perspective or from the colonization processes has been seen as folkloric or irrelevant, but which implies a strong claim of the wisdom that the Indigenous peoples’ worldview holds:

This very act of carrying out ancestral practices is a resource that we maintain over time and that we can pass on to the new generations, and that is part of our spirituality, which is alive and it is sustained. Because it is important to protect the areas that many times we use not only to extract sea products, but we use them, I don’t know, for some ceremony that is directly linked to our worldview. So, for example, it wouldn’t be nice to go for a rogation to the sea if it is full of ropes, full of lots of things that are not typical of the sea. *Mirtha White*.

A worldview that is closely related to the care and sustainable use of natural resources or common goods that they seek to protect, based on which they exercise

the role of defenders and protectors of the sea, understanding this area as a whole, inhabited by people, hydrobiological species and protective forces that coexist in harmony, and provide balance to the environment:

In the territory that we inhabit there is a ngen (protective force) that is very strong and where there have been other lamngen (women, men from the same people) who have gone to visit the area and have been afraid. Since we were children and since we used to go to those places with our father, we have always felt that force. One reaches a part that is remote and one knows that there is already something there because it feels, it feels very strong. The people who have gone say that it even scares them a little. But as we say in my family, one has respect and has that knowledge to say that we are going to go with respect to offer something and have a simple ceremony as we know, and it is something more than feeling scared, we feel protected. We believe that the fact that it is there has also influenced that in that part, where that ngen is felt, biodiversity is still conserved a lot. It's not the area where La Barra is populated, it is more remote, and one can say that where that ngen is on the coast and towards the interior of the sea. When there are good tides, there is a great abundance of seaweed, it's so much that we can't keep up to get what is there. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Hence the importance and challenge of strengthening their worldview and spirituality as the force that sustains their identity and culture, even more considering the colonization processes that have annulled and devalued beliefs and worldviews of Indigenous peoples who have a close relationship of respect with the environment and nature:

The worldview has been very important, since ancient times. And here it is something very important also that is hardly done anymore, due to all the cultural loss that was involved, because the truth is that going back is very tragic. So, I can say what we have recovered. Since the ancients' time, since the elders' time, we have transmitted the importance of the sea for the Kawésqar, because it was the area that mobilized us in the past and that it must continue to mobilize us. The sea is an energy and for others to understand it, we tell them that it is a spirit, but it is the largest spirit that exists and nothing that does not belong to the sea can be thrown to it. However, we see that this is a constant now, not for the Kawésqar, but for the others. So the sea is constantly warning us and telling us what's going on. In the ancient tales, it is said that if this is recurring, monsters will rise from the depths, and the truth is that many of us are waiting for this to happen for

a change of conscience, perhaps. And within what is spirituality, travel and navigation go together, because there are forbidden places, those that cannot be seen, and all of that cannot be explained if one doesn't walk, that is, one couldn't explain to a child what is a taboo place if one did not show it to him, or could explain to him how important a whale is within our worldview if he doesn't see it. And that's very important and relevant for men and women, but, in our case, women are the ones in charge of transmitting that. *Leticia Caro*.

And which in turn provides them with protection and continuity as Indigenous peoples who inhabit marine and coastal areas:

Si If we as a people do not understand or do not value our sea, all the life that it entails, all the spirituality that the sea has, we will hardly be able to relate to Ecmpto, or if we do it will be this way: like someone who was from a union and implements an Amerb¹. And that's not my idea. My idea is that we, the *lamngen* (sisters), when we say "We are part of an Ecmpto", we understand that it is not only to request the area so that the salmon farms do not get in, but this request is to take care of the area and protect it, because it is an area that has life, which has a lot of life, and for this reason we must also give back. That area is giving us food, it is giving us medicine, it even gives us the air that cleanses our lungs and makes us feel so energized. So, we must know how to recognize it and how to give back to it. I always tell the *lamngen*: "The sea is not a thing, no, it is a living being, as much my brother as I am his, if I respect him, he will take care of me, if I don't respect him, don't expect him to take care of me". In other words, from my personal view I tell you that since I was a girl I was near the sea, and until I was 15 years old I didn't know how to swim, but I was stuck in the water and more than once I lost my footing, and if I didn't drown it was because the *ngen lafken* (protective force of the sea) protected me, because I knew he was my brother. So, just as I see him, he also sees me and we take care of each other, we feed each other. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

For all this, and despite the non-recognition of their rights over these areas, Indigenous peoples continue to protect the sea and claim their coastal areas, due to the importance they have for their development as people and for the entire ancestral knowledge that they have developed:

¹ Benthic Resources Management and Exploitation Areas (AMERB, from the Spanish acronym).

And if the sea had been restricted for us, we would suffer more, they would kill us as Mapuche. If we are already poor because they took away the lands from us, then even more if they were going to take away the sea from us. It was already too much. So, we had the strength, the will, the capabilities to ensure that this area in one way or another would not be lost to us. [...] And many of us defended it, many people from the eighth, seventh region to the south, in those times; now it's almost all Chile, all the people who live by the sea are in these conditions, making requests for marine areas. And that is where women especially play a very important role related to health, spirituality, everything, and most of all related to the Mapuche *kimche* [Mapuche wisdom]. *Pérsida Cheuquenao*.

For the biodiversity that exists in these territories and that they seek to protect from their own vision as Indigenous peoples, related to a sustainable use of the resources that ensure their cultural use and sustenance over time:

Within our territory, one [of the important issues] is the issue of the sea, because clearly here in Caulín, in the bay, they work hard for the extraction of products, especially *pelillo* [red seaweed]. Here there are some gigantic low tides where one can still go to collect shellfish on foot and take the product. And on the topic of tourism, which is not so exploited, but still, it would be interesting, because there are possibilities. We have migratory bird watching. We have flamingos, you can see the pink beach full with flamingos, and swans. *Patricia Avendaño*.

And because they are the areas that their ancestors inhabited:

And one also begins to understand how people have always lived in the territory. So, today we are in an area, in a time more modern, but it also makes you think and takes you back in time to how they, the first inhabitants of the territory, connected with the place. And that is also an exercise that is important to do because you will understand and love the place where you are, you will understand the importance of each place, each area; the issue of getting to know how they lived, how they navigated, how they fed themselves, how they could perform their ceremonies and how important the area was to them, and today giving it that revaluation is an exercise that is still done. *María Luisa Muñoz*.

Therefore, addressing the contributions and perspectives on the marine and coastal areas of Indigenous peoples from the women's perspective cannot begin without recognizing the intrinsic and deep relationship that these people have with the sea, their environment and its resources; as well as the importance of worldview and spirituality for protection of coastal territories and areas; and the diversity of the territories and Indigenous peoples who inhabit marine and coastal areas.



Gathering shellfish is a practice and knowledge mainly of women

Views and perspectives of Indigenous women on the Marine and Coastal Areas

Importance of Marine and Coastal Areas for women

To reflect on the Ecmpto from the point of view and perspective of women, it is necessary to understand not only how Indigenous women appropriate this regulatory framework and public policy, but from where they raise their claim and defense of marine and coastal areas, taking into account above all that it is a concept that arises from the demand of the people and whose purpose is the protection of essential aspects of their culture and survival as Indigenous peoples who inhabit coastal areas, where the role of the Indigenous woman is fundamental for their cultural, political, economic and spiritual development.

In this sense, Ecmpto takes on a special importance for the Indigenous peoples, as it recognizes the community's sense of the territory and values the ancestral ways of life linked to the coastline. Thus, from the perspective of the women, the Ecmpto in practice have mainly served as:

Territory claim

Under the application of the Chilean Law 20.249, Indigenous peoples exercise the right to request a coastal area that they have ancestrally used and cared for:

For us Ecmptos are a sort of vindication for what they have taken from us throughout time because we almost disappeared from history. *Leticia Caro.*

Greater opportunities to reclaim and to peacefully carry out ancestral practices, when you can say:

“I’m going to go pick this *lawen* (medicinal plant) and I know it will be there, because a company didn’t come to settle down and throw all the trash possible and exterminate this species.” *Mirtha White*.

Territory protection

Against the extractive industry intervention, mainly salmon companies:

When salmon farming was destroying our fishing grounds and treating the members of the Kawésqar people very badly, making us fools, we began to see a way to be able to counteract that, because deep down you are seeing that someone is coming and is taking everything away from you and you can’t say anything. So, I kept searching and I found the Lafkenche Law and at first I thought it was only for Lafkenche or Mapuche or Huilliche territory and as I continued reading I asked a couple of questions and they said, “Yes, you can too.” And there I started campaigning together with my dad. *Leticia Caro*.

So, we learned about the Lafkenche Law, they told us about this law, what it consisted of and everything. We found it very good, but it wasn’t much that it covered, because the territory here is broad. So we learnt about it, but when salmon farming started, we realized that it was the only tool we had to protect our sea; that it was important to learn about that law. *María Luisa Muñoz*.

Which has led, in the long run, to greater respect for the territory by third parties:

Respect from other people who come from outside, from other places to settle into our Ecmpto. Because at least now they ask us. Now they respect us here, they ask us. It was not like this in the past. They arrived as if they owned the place and entered the commune. But not now, now they have to ask us. So I value that and see that that is the view we have, we have won that important part. *Eduvina Leutún*.

And to greater empowerment of communities in their fight and defense of the sea:

I think that going back to the sea, and people believing again that it is possible, that we as ordinary people can do something to protect these places, because I believe that there was a period of hopelessness where we said that we were not going to be able to do it, to defend it, that we depen-

ded a lot on companies that are very powerful, very big. How were we going to fight against, for example, Marine Harvest, if it is providing work? So, I think that what I heard at the beginning nowadays has changed, people just do whatever they can, and have seen that they have the power in their hands. *Pamela Zúniga.*

Internal and territorial strengthening

It generates spaces for reflecting together that allows them to unite as a territory, talk about their history and the legacy of their ancestors, as well as project themselves collectively into the future:

What makes me most happy is knowing that this Ecmpto tool helps us unite as communities, get to know each other, know that we all have this view of protecting our area, that we think not only about us, but also about our children, our grandchildren, about those who come after us, in the fact that when we talk about the Ecmpto, we talk about all the life there is, we talk about all the knowledge that there is. We talk and remember the story of my dad, my grandfather who was going out sailing, that my mother and my grandmother were going to pick up something for the gardens, for the animals, which is not in the books, because these are oral knowledge that is transmitted. So I would say that the positive thing about the Ecmpto is that it makes us remember that past that is not talked about anymore. There is that bad habit that we arrive at meetings and we talk about what project we are going to apply for. Instead, with the Ecmpto we say: “Why do we want to do this?” “Because in the past it was done this way and we took care of it.” That is something that I really like about the Ecmpto, which makes us remember our ancient history and makes us unite as a territory. Before that, each one lived in their own place, we were there in La Barra and Cailín, because those were the areas where we moved for collection. But now, with this Ecmpto, we know about Cailín, Laitec, Coldita, coastal areas, over there Yaldad, Incopulli, above San Juan de Chadmo, we know who we are, we know each other because we all want to take care of our areas, we realize that we have the same problems. So, that’s the beauty of the Ecmpto, the fact that it not only makes us protect our nearby area, but also together with the people, with this agreement with the people of Pesca, it makes us want also to protect other areas that are more distant, but that are also areas where our people navigate. So, that’s the nice thing, that’s what I value. *Ingrid Echevarría*





Positioning communities as holders of territorial rights in coastal areas, with the hope of effective governance of the sea:

The Ecmpto for me is an expectation of hope that has to do also with respect and how to make the *lafken mapu* (marine or maritime territory) visible as a unique territory, which must be respected, cared for, protected, restored, because you also have to navigate towards those horizons, to regeneration, to restoration and restitution. And clearly, one of the expectations has to do with administration, how people will be able to decide what to do in that area. *Ingrid White.*

Strengthening cultural identity

Through the relationship with these areas from their worldview, culture and spirituality:

This area allows the community to move; that the people, the che—the children, the adults, the grandparents, the young men, the young women—can move within this area and can relate to it from the spirituality, from going to a place to collect food, from fishing, and this helps us maintain and revitalize our culture of the territory. *Ingrid White.*

Transmitting their culture, knowledge and spirituality to the next generations:

This also gives strength to the little ones who are learning and loving themselves, because before many did not like to say that they were Kawésqar, they hid it. Today, the children of these communities are proud to say that they are Kawésqar, and that for us is a great achievement, especially for the fact that they know that the Ecmpto are the inheritance for them. And it is also an identity inheritance, it is not only the fact of being in an area, but that area also has a spirit, has an essence, and that is that the Kawésqar return to the territory. *Leticia Caro.*

Valuing and making visible the role of women

It recognizes the ancestral knowledge of the Indigenous peoples, and above all, of Indigenous women as they are the main transmitters of knowledge related to the care of the sea, resources and the environment:

This law is not for an engineering graduate or a minister, in other words, an authority, no; what matters is the ancestral wisdom that that person brings and that was ignored for so long, and that is law. So, I felt that this is like giving back sovereignty to the people, to those people who in the same *Lingua* said: “No”, like when they talked about traditional medici-

ne and doctors criticized a lady if she took this herbal medicine or that; this came like a slap for them and I said: “What this woman says, that is the law.” And with something so important as the sea, where we are, it is marvelous. *Pamela Zúñiga*.

Which means valuing and validating all the ancestral wisdom of Indigenous women and highlighting their importance:

The essence of the Ecmpto is the valuing of the trades, of the ancestral wisdom, and in this territory much of that wisdom is provided by the women. They are the ones who keep and deliver that information, that knowledge, that they share it, and that perhaps for a long time they kept it in silence, but now they are free to say it. Because there was a period when they didn't dare to talk about this and now they do, so it's an opportunity for them too. *Pamela Zúñiga*.

Sustainable use

It allows to talk about the territory and the resources of the sea and how they are going to manage them collectively and sustainably:

The Ecmpto are areas that we, the Indigenous people, must protect. I just started in 2019 to immerse myself, to get more involved into the issue, because before I saw it from afar, because I was not here and because many times one does not show interest in these topics as one should, and they are very relevant to daily life because ultimately this is to protect, is to take care of the areas we have, because if not, we are going to undoubtedly be affected. *Mirtha White*.

I see it [the Ecmpto] as something to care for, protect and share with the people who live here in the territory. Taking care of it more than anything and protecting it so they do not continue to exploit it anymore because our Ecmpto is already exploited, and in the end one has to take care of what there is, the little that we have. *Eduvina Leutún*.

This has generated a structuring of the work at sea carried out by the community, and it contributes to a more positive assessment of the communities who manage an Ecmpto:

The organization of work at sea has been quite noticeable for example in the extraction of small size products. Before people often didn't have the awareness that they now have. Maybe out of a bit of fear of being exposed, because if someone collects small products, other people say it

in the meetings, they talk about it, and that person is exposed [as if small products were less valuable]. *Patricia Avendaño.*

They value the fact that communities are the ones who make use of the Ecmpto. They say: “Listen, people from Indigenous communities are there and if they were not there, everything would already be contaminated.”
Ingrid Echevarría.

Roles of the women who live in Marine and Coastal Areas

Understanding roles as the function that a person represents or performs in a certain context and place, and taking into account the “principle of duality and complementarity” that exists in the Indigenous world about the relationships between men and women, where the feminine and masculine gender complement each other or constitute a duality in balance, the roles that women perform in the Ecmpto are shared and differentiated with those of men, to a greater or lesser extent depending on the territory and the historical, social and cultural processes that have occurred.

Among the roles mentioned by the interviewees are those related to the jobs they perform at sea as fisherwomen, shore collectors, among others; traditional roles such as lawentuchefe (health worker, doctor) or spiritual authorities; roles linked to leadership in their communities and organizations, and roles linked to the management of the Ecmpto. Highlighting that all of them also play the role of defenders of the sea and the territory.

Linked to sea trades

The role of fisherwomen, for example, is a profession that in some territories they develop in equal measure as men; although it is not a role that is mainly played by women, due to the difficulty they have in becoming formally accredited as artisanal fisherwomen. Something that stands out, which was not always like this, since in the past the role of fisher was exercised equally by men and women.

This is evidenced by the figures from the Artisanal Fishing Registry (RPA, in Spanish), which indicates that out of a total of 93,598 people registered as artisanal fishermen and women in the RPA of Sernapesca, in 2020, 76% (70,754) are men and only 24% (22,844) women (Supesca 2020). Formal accreditation is highly unequal between men and women, since it is not consistent in many cases with the ancestral and even current practices carried out by men and women at sea.



Another role that women perform is that of shore collectors, an activity which they develop mainly through the extraction of seafood for family food, such as clams or mussels, and planting and harvesting *pelillo* to fertilize the garden. An activity they can perform without being required a permit or procedure:

The women of La Barra are all collectors, starting with the youngest. That's the good thing. We are so close to the sea that, from the little ones to moms, we all collect seaweed, *pateado* as we call it. The tide goes out and you follow and collect *luga* (a species of red algae). [...] Well, it is also because of the imposition of the laws that the Navy, especially Sernapesca, which now demands documents as assistant, fisher, cards and other stuff. So, for us I would say the most feasible thing to access is to be shore collectors, and as a shore collector you just walk and collect seaweed. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

It is also the case of roles linked to the jobs of navigator or boat bosses, which are not performed by Indigenous women that much, or that in some territories have been lost as jobs developed by women. This is due to the difficulties and bureaucratic obstacles they face in obtaining accreditation in these occupations:

In the past people worked, they sailed with only rowing boats and fished with longlines made of vegetable fiber. That's how it was 40 years ago. There was no telephone, there was nothing. There were just things like this: when we went out, we even made smoke signals to communicate when we got lost or isolated somewhere. And women still had to be there fishing, collecting, helping all the time, with the children in the same boats, rowing them out there. Lying in the boats. I had an experience like that, because I was bringing my son in a cardboard box inside the bow, there he was. Well sheltered. That was how it was in the past. *Eduwina Leutún*.

An occupation that, despite not being done by women so much, still persists and is done by those who have not lost that relationship with the sea:

When we go sailing there is a boss who can be a man or a woman, and that boss is the one who guides the boat. There is a boss there, and everyone has to do what that boss dictates, because that person is the one who is leading us. In the past, for example, my grandmother, who is my dad's mother, was the boss of the boat, then, you did everything she said. Now it is my dad, so you have to do everything he says. And surely, in the future, maybe it's me or it's my sister, and we'll have to do everything the one in charge says. There is that structure there, it is the only place where the Kawésqar have bosses. In fact, the ancients say that each one is the owner of one's boat and

the place where one wants to guide, and the rest of the family in sailing must do what the boss says. Of course, one has to be a good boss, that is, if there is a boss that we know is making a mistake, we are not going to get on with him again. So, the leader of the boat also has to be a person who knows the territory, who knows when to go out and when not to. *Leticia Caro*.

Traditional roles

Those roles for which one has a spiritual and cultural “calling”, such as the role of lawentuchefe, referring to people, often women, responsible for medicinal plants, and which in coastal areas are related with seafood, such as seaweed:

Medicine is a topic that in my maternal family, from back in Coyhaique, has been carried through for years. A female ancestor of ours—because those who have brought this knowledge are basically women—was the first midwife in Coyhaique, who was travelling by horse in those years, when they had just arrived to settle. [...] Another role of women in my community is that they dedicate themselves to work medicinally with algae, which I have not seen in other communities. I believe that the work with seaweed, both to make them food as well as to make medicine, has been our activity. We, since the main collection we do is *luga*, make ointments or lotions to relax the muscles. We always had this knowledge of some algae that are medicinal, but in the past we did not make lotions or ointments in small bottles, because we didn't know about them. So, for example, if someone was hurt or had bone pain, fresh sargassum was collected, they heated it above the kitchen and then put it straight, like a hot patch. Now we have the spray, we have the cream, it's different. *Ingrid Echevarría*

Or the role to spiritually strengthen the community, accompany the internal processes of its people in a spiritual way. Roles that in many territories have remained strong over time, but in others, due to the processes of colonization and dispossession, they were lost, although they have been re-emerging in recent decades:

Only now the spiritual issue and spiritual roles seem to be rising more. But in a few years, we will have more positions, and in other communities they will also be more spiritual authorities. And we also have that role of supporting them, as a community and as a spiritual authority. Every time a community wants to rise, or to achieve something or to know more about the topic, about the ceremony, we will always be there supporting them. *Rocío Colivoro*.

Community leadership

The leadership positions that are assumed in the community through appointment or election respond to the leadership capabilities of the people, their educational level, technical knowledge, among others. Roles that women have been increasingly developing in their Indigenous communities and organizations, from which they have promoted the defense of their territorial rights in coastal areas:

And in that journey of leadership, I met many people, many organizations, in some of which I still participate today, as in the Lafkenche Territorial Identity organization. Since 2000 I have been supporting this organization, which at that time was not an organization, it was only a group of leaders ensuring the rights of the communities, in this case related to the sea. According to the Fisheries and Aquaculture Law at that time in 1992, our communities and our opinions were not taken into account. Nowadays it is still like that, we were not consulted if it was harmful to us where the sea was going to be concessioned. And leaders who were working in some institution appeared there and they realized that it was going to be our problem, because our lands were taken from us, we were cornered into the hills, the mountains, and others to the sea. And they were even going to take away our sea area, they were not going to let us have free access to it. So, it was very difficult to raise that idea of law and to make it into a project, then we talked a lot with the people, with the leaders, from community to community, we looked like Jehovah's Witnesses, because we went to talk with everyone, with the elders, with different organizations, with all the communities. *Pérsida Cheuquenao.*

Roles from which they contribute with a comprehensive vision and for the protection of coastal areas:

Today the role that women have is to manage, to be a leader, to be a representative within the Ecmpto, and that role is vital because women have a much broader vision that has to do a lot with protection, because we the women tend to protect a lot our family, our environment and, therefore, we see the sea as a source of life that we must continue to protect and care for. *Ingrid White.*

As well as the role of intercultural educators, who, although they respond to public institutions, contribute to the strengthening of the community by rescuing and revitalizing culture, people's identity, and traditional knowledge:

My other role within this territory is also linked to education, to support in the process of intercultural education, in working with children from different schools in this territory and we also link with the community, the territories, the people, trying to rescue culture and traditions. [...] Educating from a search, from that kimun, from that knowledge that is forgotten. But not only searching, but also for revitalizing and putting into practice that knowledge. *Ingrid White*.

It is worth specifying that traditional roles are exercised at the same time and in a complementary manner with the leadership roles developed in the community and Indigenous organizations:

I had to go to the *lonko* (traditional authority), the *gempin* (owner of the word), and the *gempin* and the *lonko* had their *trawün* (meeting for reflection and dialogue) and they said: “Look, *lamngen* (sister), look at the importance of what you are telling us and we didn’t realize.” They complement each other. In my case, with my experience, it was never a contradiction. On the contrary, it was feedback from each other, because as a leader I understood the most spiritual, not so much politically partisan—and I am not a partisan either—but I saw this that if we were going to participate in the *nguillatun* (ceremony) and we did not defend the sea area, our *nguillatun* was going to be stuck. So how do we solve this? Either we stay alone, or we unite further. And we united more, because a *lonko* from this area does not go to the sea, but he finishes his *nguillatun* and in the same place he says: “I don’t finish my *nguillatun* there, nothing happens, but my people go there to look for medicine, so it is also important for me.” So we all started connecting in one way or another, and we realized that if the sea was important we had to defend it, we had to seek a way to make it ours and manage it ourselves. *Pérsida Cheuquenao*.

Management of Marine and Coastal Areas

For example, through the technical and administrative assistance provided in the Ecmpto application process:

I’m still the one who carries out all the processes, all the judicial and administrative processes, all the steps that must be completed, that’s what I do. *Leticia Caro*.

Or mediating between State institutions and community members during the Ecmpto application process:

That means, for example, to tell them: “People, CONADI (Chilean National Corporation for Indigenous Development) is coming to inspect whether or not we comply with what we say on paper”, then what I have to do is explain to them, in a way that they can understand me, the reason why they come. Because the first thing they say to me is: “And what does it matter to them? What are they going to know? What do they have to say if we do or don’t do?” Because that is what they say, so we have to make them understand that it is part of the process. We do all that. *Leticia Caro.*

Or supporting the validation processes of customary uses that are developed in the Ecmpto, taking into account that many of them are carried out and transmitted by women to the next generations. For example, shellfishing and knowing what shellfish to collect for specific meals is a knowledge which could be said to belong only to women, just like the use of medicine and seaweed harvesting:

When CONADI visited us, I was in charge of showing the area, since I am the one who directs and sees and has done more with the workshops with the same *lamngen* (sisters), teaching them other techniques to make medicines, and I am the one who has the most knowledge of middens, with the corral, because I have had training to recognize those areas there, that not all people in Chaiguao know how to recognize, for example, the corral made of stones. People know about middens but they don’t know how to distinguish if it’s a midden or just a pile of shells. So, since I have that knowledge, I have had to see that, I have had to show where the ancient fossils are. So, my role was to show that to the people who come to interview us, to take them through the territory, show them everything that was ancient, that was here before we arrived, and also talk to them about the use we give not only to seaweed harvesting as productive work, but also to medicinal herbs, there on the beach. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Defense of the sea and territory

Because of the defense they carry out of said areas against threats from third parties, and for being fundamental areas for their material and spiritual sustenance. As a result of this, they have had a substantial role as promoters of the Ecmpto Law, because they always understood that it was an area that they had to protect and conserve:

Then, women raised their voices more than men, and they complement each other. So, what am I going to live on if I got seaweed from there to be able to sustain my family, what am I going to live on if

they forbid me, if from there I could make money to cover the expenses of my family, if there women always make use, of the customary use rights as they call it. This is how everything was changed in those terms, that *kimun* (knowledge) of the *ñañaas* (women), of the *lamngen* (sisters). And the women said: “When I have bad dreams, I go to the sea or I look towards the sea so that it gives me the *newen* [strength], so that it gives purification, so that it gives me wisdom”, because there *muneyelullüm tani am kay, feimuta amuy tañi futakecheyem, feymuta lelimekeenew tañi futakecheyem* (it is thought that over there, behind the sea or in the *nome lafken*, there is the spirit of my father, of my grandparents, and that is where that strength is coming from so that I have more energy and can defend what is mine). That perspective always came mainly from the *ñañaas*, that’s why the role of women was extremely important so that the *lamngen* and all the other organizations and communities, would become aware of this problem that we were going to have if they took the sea away from us. *Pérsida Cheuquenao*.



Pérsida Cheuquenao Aillapan, lafkenmapu (marine territory)

Customary uses of women at the sea

Customary uses are those traditional uses that are carried out frequently or repeatedly over time, forming part of the common actions of a people or community. Therefore, customary is linked to custom. In this sense, the Ecmpos recognize the ‘custom’ of Indigenous communities around the sea and the community sense of the territory, since the uses that are invoked to validate Ecmpos’s request, such as the food use of seafood, medicinal use, residential use, etc., are recognized by the community of members that make up the applicant Indigenous communities. Thus, the Ecmpos give recognition to that custom that is called ‘customary use’ in the regulations.

Likewise, the customary uses carried out by coastal communities incorporate the relationship between the sea and the territory, since the agricultural and fishing activities that are carried out are integrated into their production models and in the management of common goods found there.

Among the various customary uses carried out by Indigenous women in the Ecmpos—which are in no way exhaustive, since each territory has its certain customs and its own way of organizing, which allows them to invoke a diversity of customary uses, always linked to their traditional knowledge and the spirituality of their people—the women interviewed pointed out the following:

Food

Referring to their use of seafood—obtained through fishing and harvesting—for family nutrition:

Most are women who collect shellfish. They bring out their products, to make a *curanto* (traditional food) one goes and collects products, or entire families go. In my case at least, when we go fishing for shellfish, we all go: my husband, my children, and it is mainly for the house, not to sell, it is for us. [...] But generally, one goes fishing for shellfish to do a *pulmay* (traditional food) or a *curanto* for the family. *Pamela Avendaño*.

Collection and extraction that is closely related to their knowledge regarding how to collect, prepare, preserve, process, and store these foods:

Women still have the knowledge, for example, of what wood to use to smoke those large and small mussels or those fish, or how to do it, on what moon

are they going to go to collect such foods, or with what tools to extract them, or extraction techniques, from the beings from the *lafken* (sea), or what plants are there for medicine. *Ingrid White*.

Knowledge that continues to be renewed and expanded through exchanges with other women from coastal areas:

There were some seaweed about which we knew certain things and the *lamngen*, when she taught us about these same seaweed, told us: “But you know what, they are used for this, but they are also useful for this other thing as well”; so, we expand our knowledge. I believe that no one had the idea of making salads with *lamilla* seaweed before, because one says: “No, the *lamilla* is lying there”, and now it is a salad. We make pancakes of *luga*, and people say: “Pancakes of *luga*, who eats that?” We have given *luga* pancakes to people and they eat them as if they were chard pancakes. And after they eat them, we tell them: “It’s made of *luga*”, and they say: “Really? But it is so good”, and we say: “If it is fresh *luga* that is chopped with onion, just like how chard pancakes are made, but with black *luga*, the one that is smooth, not the other one that is thick and porous and looks like pig leather. We use the softest one.” We also have *luche*, everyone knows the *luche* and how it is cooked. I think that also another thing that caused a lot of curiosity for a while to the visitors who arrived was when I prepared *cochayuyo* (southern bull kelp) juice. People don’t really know, and everyone saw the color and said: “Ah, it’s *huesillo* (dried peach).” *Ingrid Echevarría*.

Medicine

Their use of various plants, seaweed and sea resources to obtain *lawen* (medicine); which allows them to exercise their own health systems, mainly developed by women:

I would say that our main strength is the medicine, and that knowledge of how it is used and in what quantities, and on what date we are going to collect the seaweed. Just like the *lamngen* (women) who focus only on herbs, we also have our moons, we have our dates and how to do it. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

Hay muchas algas y animales dentro del *lafken* (mar), hasta el agua del *lafken* es medicinal, entonces, también hay plantas, por ejemplo, que están en el borde costero que ayudan a reestablecer el *küime felen*, el estar bien, o el *küime mongen*, el buen vivir. *Ingrid White*.

Which implies a spiritual relationship with the area, because in the sea people's worldview, this area is medicine in itself:

In order to heal myself psychologically and spiritually, we go and connect with the sea, with the sea air, because this sea has many resources, and that water serves us. It will be very cold, very salty, but it is important for our being. And so, we go to the water for many things. For example, today we have the problem of thyroid, and sea water is very good for controlling the thyroid. *Pérsida Cheuquenao*.

Agricultural

For example, the use of seafood with the objective of improving the production of the orchards. Activity carried out mainly by Indigenous women, and which in the case of women from coastal areas is carried out by integrating their knowledge about the sea and the land to improve planting and ensure their nutrition; for example, using the *pelillo* (*Gracilaria* seaweeds) as fertilizer in the gardens:

There is also collection of seafood to use in the kitchen and to produce in the garden, where *pelillo* is used a lot. We have a land that is very brown and needs a lot of salt, so, for this, for having a good production, we use *pelillo* and those other seaweed. *Mirtha Withe*.

We use the *lamilla* for the potatoes, for the orchards; it is still preserved here in Caulín using the *lamilla* [the *pelillo*] as fertilizer. *Patricia Avendaño*.

Connectivity

Use of the sea as a means of connectivity with other islands and territories:

What I always observed since I was little is that the coastal area was a mobility area. It was always used to go to the doctor, to go shopping for something that could not be produced in the territory, to visit the family, but it also was and is—because it still is and will be as long as we keep it that way—the first support of life for our community. *Ingrid White*.

Ceremonial

Or for the practice of their spirituality, allowing them a ceremonial use of these areas based on a relationship of deep respect and harmony with the environment and according to the worldview of their people:

Sailing is a ceremony. From the minute one leaves one's place is a ceremony; arriving at any of the islands is a ceremony. Every time I get on or off the boat, I have to clear everything I could take out or remove what each island contains, so I don't take them to the boat because I'm going to transfer to others where other spirits, people, or energies exist, and so on. That is a ceremony, but it is also part of a health system, and that is what we have proven. Here, the elders who are ailing go sailing and they come back as if they were 15 years old. *Leticia Caro.*

And of course the spiritual relationship, because where we live, where our community is, we have a cemetery, and that cemetery for a long time was the symbol of the trip, of che's trip, of the person to reach the *ka mapu* (continuity of life), to reach another land and be able to transcend. So, that area has a lot to do with spirituality, because it has to do with the journey, with the journey that loved ones or ancestors must undertake, or we too, that we are going to undertake towards another land. *Ingrid White.*

Recreational

The connection they build when relating to the sea and inhabiting the area:

We go to the sea, to other areas, for example, we use it as an area to go for a walk with the children, to get to know and recognize certain things, certain seafood or things like that at the sea or the beach. *Mirtha White.*

Artisanal

Use of sea products for work or production of artisanal products such as the weavings made by the women of the coastal areas, where they use elements of the sea for dyeing wool:

We go to the sea to take the rag, which is a special mud that is used for dyeing wool, and some medicinal plants, and also to gather some shellfish, seaweed, all those marine products that generally men often do not collect, but the woman goes to look for them for human consumption. *Pérsida Cheuquenao.*

Contributions by women from Marine and Coastal Areas

Women from coastal areas—through different roles and customary uses related to their knowledge as Indigenous women—provide important contributions to the social,

cultural and political development of their people, to the strengthening and integration of their organizations, to the sustainable conservation of common assets, and to the family, local and community economy and their people and territories.

Cultural

The reproduction of culture from the different uses and roles that are developed in the Ecmpto is a fundamental aspect and at the same time a challenge that Indigenous women from various territories highlight:

It is very important that we consider how we position ourselves by searching or investigating what were the traditional practices in this territory. So, for example, I know that there is planting in the sea, which is a practice that I have heard of in Chiloé and I imagine that in this territory it was also done, because of the relationship we have with the island. And nowadays this is not practiced here. That's a knowledge that is left with the elders, and the elders are passing away with that wisdom that they are not transmitting. So, that's why we should also investigate a little about those topics, about what spiritual practices were carried out in the *lafken*. Because, for example, we perform itinerant *llellipun*, in the *lafken*, we perform rogations, and we perform them as we have been learning, but not from here, we have been learning from other territories. So that's important too, to highlight that, of course, you can contribute, but you also have to do it from the local point of view and from knowledge, from the *Huilliche kimun*, from the Huilliche knowledge. *Ingrid White*.

The inputs and cultural contributions that are demonstrated are an integration of their worldview regarding caring for the environment. This shows that their way of life is a development option:

To be able to transmit that knowledge or those practices that also have wisdom behind them, they have to be done in a certain way, with certain *az* (character), as we call it, and that can be transmitted to new generations as well. *Ingrid White*.

Which at the same time contributes to the appreciation and strengthening of their Indigenous identity, especially their identity as Indigenous women from coastal areas:

I believe that women can value themselves even more in the role they play, especially those who perform the roles of shore collectors, fisherwomen, or divers. Perhaps in this way their work can be valued. *Ingrid White*.

Social

We understand them as contributions to social and local integration between community organizations where women actively participate, with the aim of promoting social changes in the local environment and achieving the common good of the community in the territory. This can be seen, for example, when they point out the contribution of the Ecmpto to the articulation of the various organizations that share the same territory:



Haydée Aguila (Kawésqar) presenting at the Women's Gathering in Pichicolo.

At first, Ecmpto started as something small, and then they brought together more organizations, unions, and other communities in the community. Then, more people joined. They are not just for Indigenous communities, there are also unions included in the Ecmpto. *Patricia Avendaño*.

Or the contribution of the Ecmpto in coastal planning and the practices carried out there:

With coastal planning, the issue of the *pelillo* was also regularized, because before everyone worked and sold their products independently. Now that the issue of the coastal area has been addressed, we've been trying to organize things more, so (for example) we now plant in places where we're allowed to do so. Because (before) there were parts that were being planted and those places were breeding grounds [of birds], so the space of the birds was not being respected. So, it was too disorderly and with the Ecmpto it has become ordered quite a bit. *Patricia Avendaño*.

These are aspects that seek social improvements or the common good of its inhabitants. It is said that they predominate more in female leaderships and are closely related to living well, which shows that Indigenous development is a viable alternative for neoliberalism, because it is linked to the sustainable use of the territory's resources and the reproduction of culture (Mandel 2017):

That generosity of: "This is for everyone, this is for the common good, to last for other generations." I know territories where there are leaders more focused on fishing and some leaders more focused on communities. The vision of the leader focused on the community is: "Let's take care of this for everyone." The vision of the fishing leader is: "This is for us from the union", something like that. Leaders focused on the community tend to be women, they try more to envision the future of the children, the grandchildren. Not in all cases though, because there are also male leaders who have that more supportive discourse. *Pamela Zúñiga*.

Thus, granting the administration of a coastal and marine area to Indigenous peoples has the potential to promote development that is based on the well-being of the community and anchored in the territory.

Environmental

Climate change—that increasingly affects the biodiversity of the planet and its ability to contribute to people's well-being—presents great challenges regarding how to adapt to increasingly accelerated changes and how to achieve sustainable con-

servation of resources, when some of the most affected are Indigenous peoples and Indigenous women, who at the same time contribute the least to generating greenhouse gas emissions:

I do not believe that all people are guilty of generating or accelerating this climate change, but there is a capitalist extractivist model that is encouraging this to happen, and this has meant the submission and lack of participation of women in spaces of power. [...] This extractivist model does not want to be a model with a vision of protection, but rather a model of exploitation. So if we continue to promote that Western thinking, it is probably going to be very difficult to know what we can contribute or how we can adapt to things that are not within our control. [...] I think there is still a lot to rescue and how we adapt to this, but from our Huilliche *raquizuam*, our thinking, deep down what is happening mainly has to do with the imbalance and the loss of our knowledge. *Ingrid White*.

Everything that is happening today—I am referring to climate change and the urgency of protecting the environment—is something that Indigenous peoples have not caused because they have a very friendly coexistence with the environment. The issue is how today the others learn about how Indigenous peoples live with the territory. *María Luisa Muñoz*.

Hence the importance of knowing about the environment, the changes that occur in the territory, and traditional and local knowledge on sustainable conservation of resources and biodiversity generally held by the Indigenous people, and especially women:

I would say that women in general, not just in my community, have a lot of medicinal knowledge, a lot of knowledge of gardens, seeds, plants, of some practices that perhaps they heard from their mother, from their grandmother, that perhaps they are not practiced, but they do know the stories or they lived it when they were children. It's a lot of science, we could call it something, and, if at some point we could make them feel more proud, I mean not be afraid to share this knowledge, it would be a tremendous recovery, there is tremendous potential there. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

Knowledge that can be further developed by securing coastal and marine areas for them that allows maintaining that relationship and care with the area, since one of the objectives of the Ecmpto is the conservation of the resources found there:





The Ecmpto was created to protect our resources, because there are places that are natural seedbeds and those places must be taken care of so that they continue to be repopulated. That is the objective of Ecmpto. *Patricia Avendaño.*

I believe that most people who are gatherers or fishers, and the Indigenous people, are very aware of the right size of certain products or when those products are most available. So, the fact of always being linked to the *lafken mapu* (marine or maritime territory) also generates that knowledge, of for example the right size to extract clams, I always have to leave the small ones. And that has to do with sustainability—because, if we become predators and extractivists, sustainability is destroyed, but if we continue to maintain our worldview or our Huilliche *raqizuam* (thought), Mapuche *raqizuam*, it will help us as women to become stronger and we can continue to contribute to making this sustainable over time, for future generations. *Ingrid White.*

Knowledge that in turn contributes to the care and sustainability of marine coastal areas, and allows communities to adapt to extreme circumstances and difficult situations that arise due to the climate crisis:

For example, last year we planted potatoes in three different periods, in three moons, in three different ‘falls’ (of the moon, referring to waning moon): July and two in August, to identify which ones worked best. And what turned out best was July. Because in the past it was the big potato *minga* (*tradition of collaboration on a specific task*), and now we realized that if we did the big potato *minga*, we risked if blight fell on it, it fell on everything. On the other hand, if we do it on different moons, we will be able to save some. And that made it possible for us to save one, because we couldn’t save the one that went further into the summer, because the blight fell on it very soon and the potato was snatched. Now people began to plant later, but also because afterwards there was a period in which those from July and August still had blight on them. So what we learned was to sow in three different periods, just in case. *Pamela Zúñiga.*

Therefore, recognizing the Ecmpto grants Indigenous communities the administration of coastal and marine areas based on their uses and knowledge of their ecosystem, contributes to the care and sustainability of the territory, and also helps raise awareness about the care of nature and resources:

The Ecmpto helps in the sense that it creates awareness that one has to respect the cycles of nature. Because if you go to collect shellfish on foot and you get products, that is, for example small clams that are seeds, the next year that seed will no longer be there to continue producing. So, it has been learned through Ecmpto, from the partners who are saying: “This year you will no longer be able to go get a tiny clam because that is a seed, you have to leave it there.” Or that you go to collect shellfish on the beach and you see that the person who is working next to you is putting out a seed and you are able to say: “Hey, excuse me, but you can’t get that clam out.” So those things are enriching because they are generating awareness. *Patricia Avendaño.*

Economic

The contribution of Indigenous women in coastal areas to the family and local economy is immense; for example, through the sustainable maintenance of resources and thereby ensuring the products necessary for food for the family and community:

It is women who carry out many activities at sea, including on the islands, for the family economy. We believe that later an economic income can be generated from the Ecmpto, so they do not have to leave their islands to look for new opportunities because there are no jobs but that the Ecmpto itself can generate work. *Pamela Zúniga.*

And without a doubt the Ecmpto opens opportunities for economic initiatives for women, who can ensure the sense of belonging to the territory, avoiding population migration.

However, women’s work at sea is rarely made visible and paid, because they work from the perspective of subsistence and domestic contribution. Although this work often involves complex and long processes of processing products based on their ancestral knowledge:

There are activities that are not paid and are related to feeding. So, there are practices, such as smoking seafood, where women go and collect, for example razor clams, then they boil, shell, skewer them, and after that they smoke them, and in that way there is food when needed. Or some women preserve through other processes, which are generally not smoking seafood and fish, because fish is also smoked. And in case of those who are paid, there is the same system of collecting from the shore, but they sell, for example, at fairs, or they exchange them. *Ingrid White.*

And although some activities carried out by women at sea have a productive and economic focus, this is low scale and without environmental consequences for the territory:

Which is not so many *lucas* (not so much money), because as I told you, they go down to gather shellfish and it is more for the house, but the issue of *pelillo* extraction is productive for them, most of them support themselves from it, or it is a fundamental contribution to their income. *Pamela Avendaño*.

Or they contribute to other forms of development or to more supportive economies through *trafkintu* (exchange), and free fairs:

I would say that those of us who dedicate ourselves to what is medicinal and make medicines, in general we do it within family; we share these remedies, do *trafkintu*: “I have the remedy, you have seeds”, and we do a *trafkintu* there, which is also a matter of economics. We do that internally, but of course, if people come from other places, foreigners, but they have arrived at my house for consultations or for remedies, of course, one charges, but as when someone goes to a paramedic or doctor and asks for injections. So that also generates an income for us, mainly for women. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

Contributing to fundamental aspects, such as food sovereignty, through their knowledge and appreciation of the common goods and economic potential of the territory:

I believe that it contributes mainly to maintaining food sovereignty, to maintaining that access to food at any time, because if we return to the same example of smoking, the food will always be available. So, we will no longer have to wait for the moon or the low tide, but it will already be available when the family, children, grandparents, colleagues, or whoever we are sharing with within our family needs them. *Ingrid White*.

Positioning the demand for a healthy diet, free of toxic or transgenic products:

Nowadays, the food that you consume, that you buy at the market, is making you sick, so, why are there so many diseases? That is also why there is discussion about the salmon and which today is gaining a better understanding. The fact that we have had that movement opened other areas that no one expected. We are talking about sustainable salmon because it is sold as ‘sustainable salmon,’ but that salmon grows in a crowded place, which is also introduced (species), therefore, it is a salmon that has to adapt to that environment, to that place and they get sick, and they are on an amount of antibiotics that is five hundred times more than what is allowed (inter-

nationally), but Chile allows it. So, they put a lot of things in it and that is the salmon we are eating, one hundred percent toxic, and they sell that as ‘sustainable salmon.’ So as with the salmon process, it’s like that with the meat process, the chickens, they are grown with hormones and we pay a high price for that food. And so on, even fruits and vegetables today are also being genetically modified; so, you are not eating an apple that grows on a tree in a natural place. *María Luisa Muñoz.*

Despite these contributions, few are the possibilities that women have to promote and sustain their economic ventures in the Ecmpto, in order to achieve economic autonomy for women and the community:

In the Huichas Islands they had a project to create a cooperative that was a processing plant where they could sell, to give an example, the *doyas*, which are abundant here, and sell them in jars at local or national restaurants as an entrepreneurship idea. Another idea that circulates a lot here is that JUNAEB (organism in charge of providing food for children at public schools in Chile) buys, perhaps from its companies, from local producers, food from both the land and the sea, so that children begin to eat seafood from the community itself and from the food provided by JUNAEB. Eat *luche*, eat *cochayuyo*, eat razor clams, whatever is on your island. *Pamela Zúniga.*

Difficulties of Indigenous communities regarding the Marine and Coastal Areas

It is also important to point out the difficulties that Indigenous communities face during the Ecmpto application and administration processes seen from the perspective of women, since it responds to approaches that arise from their own realities and contexts as Indigenous women who inhabit coastal areas. So, for example, we have:

State bureaucracy

Mainly linked to the number of requirements, procedures and long turnaround for the approval of an Ecmpto, which creates exhaustion, fatigue and a lot of investment of time and resources that communities do not have:

I think the risk is that people get tired, as this issue takes so long to be approved, people can get discouraged along the way, I don’t know if by abandoning it, but that would cause it to remain unsolved, and losing so





much work after so long because of getting discouraged, after so much efforts, because everything is self-managed. I think that's one of the fears, yes, a risk. *Pamela Zúñiga*.

The procedures, the paperwork, that is an exhausting topic. Because it's so much paper, so many things, so many visits, it seems like they want to bore you so that you don't make progress, and suddenly someone says: "Now, we sent everything, made all the requests, did all the studies, everything is entered" and suddenly: "No, know that this happened," and it's a step backwards. And that work is exhausting, it is a job that is boring and makes you angry because you say: "Oh, of course, when these are issues with the people of the Indigenous communities, they remember all the laws, the papers, the requirements and everything else," but giving a concession to the salmon farm comes out very quickly. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

The Ecmpto processing alone lasted about six or eight months and we had to force it with an appeal for legal protection. *Leticia Caro*

Lack of an intercultural approach

That is what prevents us from understanding the diversity of the Indigenous peoples of the sea that inhabit Chile, since Indigenous peoples are not a homogeneous group, but rather they respond to dynamics, historical processes, colonization processes and very diverse realities.

For example, the Kawésqar people are essentially nomadic and with a very strong family structure in their organization:

The regulations do not understand that. And like with the other communities who are associated with us, who also travel through their areas, because we do not move as a group to explore the territory, but rather each family—because the structure of the Kawésqar people is family, it is not community. The community is a legal personality that in this case is imposed by the State so that we can deal with the State, with governments, with services, etc., but the real structure of the Kawésqar people is a family trunk, it is a family organization, and it is just how we move within the communities. *Leticia Caro*.

Failure to address Ecmpto requests with an intercultural approach prevents a real understanding of the diversity of Indigenous territories, their complexity and the special relationship that they have for Indigenous peoples, in order to establish procedures

with cultural relevance for the recognition of the Ecmpto, based on respect and appreciation of diverse cultures:

We are also related to the Muñoz Gamero Peninsula Ecmpto which belongs to the Aswal Ajep community, where we have entered a claim for how the area was recognized: for example, out of 300 thousand hectares, 3% of the area was recognized, a very strange thing. That is why we say that in that case neither the legislation nor the public services that are in charge of this recognition—for example, CONADI, Subpesca—understand the territory. They do not understand the nomadic territory because what they have learned about that area is almost only the sailing outing. It's like the middle of a street, it's like they went sailing and that's what they learned. They did not understand the fishing that is carried out, which is an extensive activity that also requires areas that you have to give it to nature so that it reproduces again. [...] And also understanding that we put in the claim that this area was nomadic Kawésqar territory, so it could not be seen as, for example, the areas that have been granted to the Lafkenche communities, where they travel 5 miles or 12 miles, but within their same place, and we don't, we have to move, perhaps 200 kilometers, to just start in the areas where there is activity of subsistence. *Leticia Caro.*

Or that allows us to understand the history and processes of colonization and extermination that the Indigenous peoples have been subjected to, when evaluating a request for Ecmpto. As María Luisa Muñoz from the Yagán people tells us about the two declarations of inadmissibility of her Ecmpto request, on the grounds that it was a single community with few members:

They did not give us the opportunity to demonstrate that there are these peoples who are present, who endure, in one way or another, despite everything that has happened in this process of transformation, and also of a lot of pain; they didn't even give us that opportunity. And what hurts the most is that they did it speaking about the reduction, the few people who remain, without the State understanding the history of the Yagán people, which is almost an extinct people. Without understanding why, if the community—the Yagán people—did not decide to be few. So, not understanding what happened means continuing to deny us, to make us invisible. So that's when you try to understand a little about the processes and you realize that we are still marginalized, we continue to deny a people who are totally present in their territory and it is not convenient for the State to recognize us, it prefers to keep us as one of the few on the margin, those who at some point are going to die and will disappear. *María Luisa Muñoz.*



María Navarro Águila, Kawésqar people and Brígida Deumacan Mapuche people.
Calbuco, marzo 2023

As well as understanding that in isolated and distant territories the dynamics of community participation are different:

The issue is to achieve, for example, that everyone actively participates, that does not happen. And it's something that I have explained to half of the world. Here we are not going to find a lot of people gathering, I don't know, like the Mapuches do, to have a *trawün* (meeting for reflection and dialogue), that does not exist, because we understand that we are all very distant from each other, that here the community organization is an imagined legal personality. So, when people say 'the Kawésqar community', they imagine that there is a community where all live in the same place. That is why the first thing is always to understand the territorial area, and then we are going to understand that it is very difficult for people to get together, but the important thing about that is that they understand the basis of the Ecmpto. *Leticia Caro*.

Difficulty understanding the concept of Ecmpto

The lack of understanding or information about the Ecmpto often causes opposition to it, because they do not know what it implies and see it rather as a threat to the activities carried out in the territories:

[It was important] That people understood that it was not that a group of people were trying to take over the beach and that no one was going to be able to go there to work. Because that's what people thought at first, that it was going to be like for my father-in-law's family and the rest were not going to be able to do anything at the beach. So, they kind of learned about those things through time, and they began to realize that this was not the case. But it was difficult, for the same issue of communication, [to learn about] what the Ecmpto is. But over time that issue has been clarified. *Patricia Avendaño.*

So with information and proper work on the bases you can reverse the disinformation:

It happened that many people confused what an Ecmpto was with an Amerb[Benthic Resources Management and Exploitation Areas]. So, what did they say? "No, the people of the La Barra community with the people of Cailín, they are not going to let us sail, they are not going to let us even go down to the beach." So, we had work to do even with the family itself, which didn't know, to say: "No, you know what, look, it's not the same, the Amerb only works with people who are members of a union, and it is very exclusive, because you can't go to work if you worked before within that area, you can't do it anymore if you're not part of the union. On the other hand, the Ecmpto is not like that, the Ecmpto involves the entire community, not just the people in the Indigenous community, but all those who inhabit the territory." So, there was that information work. In fact now, we, the Council of Ancestral Indigenous Communities of Quellón, have this kind of agreement with the fishing people, with the unions, which until now it seems that there are eleven or twelve, with whom we are working together on the Guafo and Waiwen Ecmpto. So, for the work that was given first on a small scale, working like little ants, each one in their own sectors and in their closest circles, and then it was expanded to the fishing people, and there they needed the fishing leaders and they arrived, there was everything, yes, but they understood, that was the good thing, that they understood and this trust was created. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Accreditation of customary uses

A process that is complex, taking into account that customary uses are largely intangible knowledge orally transmitted, which makes it more difficult for verification and accreditation:

One of the things that has to be proven is customary uses, that is, the ancestral uses that were or are given to the sea. However, that is still a bit complex to validate because, if we talk from our Mapuche *kimun* (knowledge) or Huilliche *kimun*, the transfer of knowledge was always oral and not written. So, the fact that transmission of knowledge has been orally makes it a little difficult to prove these uses, and that tangible issues have to be accredited: everything that had to be investigated, photographs, historical data, which involve the Indigenous people who are requesting that area in the *lafken mapu* (marine territory or marine area). *Ingrid White*.

Supervision and monitoring of management

The supervision and monitoring of the community members so that they carry out their activities in accordance with what is approved in the administration plans is undoubtedly a complex task, because the behaviors or uses of the coastal area do not change overnight only because there is a document, but there has to be a whole process of community awareness and education:

Our Ecmpto was approved with the management plan and my role is to try to help comply with it, because it has been complicated. We have had problems with one or two people who are always like they don't understand; I don't know, I'm going to give you [as an example the] extraction of sea urchins or clams, which have been the products approved for extraction, and they don't understand that they can't get a small size and they keep doing it. And there has to be one like [if they were] a small child, calling their attention and providing a stop to that, because that's what we're supposed to be doing, to safeguard the growth and development of the product. *Patricia Avendaño*.

Tensions with other territories and organizations

That do not respect the ancestral use carried out by some communities in the Ecmpto that they seek to protect:

In the case of the Desertores there are also conflicts because there is another big working group and the people of these archipelagos, at least in some islands such as Apiao, Alao, Chaulinec, Caguach have customary use, that is, the ancient, very ancestral action, of going to gather shellfish in the Desertores. Before they fished for mussels, now for luga, there is always a reason to go to the Desertores. But the Desertores are also in their protection process, then they're kind of getting picky with that part of the ancestral use, then it is not healthy either to avoid it. We are doing an Ecmo in Quinchao and people arrive from Alao and Chaulinec to have a ranch in Quinchao to get seafood and we cannot prohibit that from happening because that is part of the ancestral use. So, there are a lot of things to iron out in that process. *Pamela Zúñiga.*



Eduvina Leutún, Amotuy Ruca community, Hualaihué.

Gaps and strategies for participation of women in Marine and Coastal Areas

Gaps

The participation of women in the Ecmpto, although it is increasingly present in these areas, still entails multiple difficulties and challenges, since not all people manage to get involved, participate and assume governance roles under equal conditions, generating gaps that prevent them from participating effectively or under equitable conditions, due, for example, to a greater workload and care, the lack of representation in decision-making, jobs that are little valued or paid, among others.

Likewise, we must recognize that we live in a deeply unequal society, in which racist and sexist practices that divide society still predominate and affect the rights of groups and collectivities in situations of greater vulnerability, such as Indigenous peoples and women. The gaps in relation to women's participation imply a problem for the representation of their diverse social, cultural, economic and environmental interests. This can lead to areas in which mainly people who enjoy more time, resources and capacities to influence the collective debate participate.

Therefore, it is important to move towards conditions of access in the participation of all, seeking the complementary action of women and men, in agreement to the principle of duality or complementarity that exists in the Indigenous world, and that ensures greater diversity of voices and perspectives.

Increased workload and care

Due to the multiple workloads faced by Indigenous women—as compared to men—since they are doing work at sea, they generally do not get remunerated; homework;

care work for minors or dependent people such as daughters and sons, granddaughters and grandsons, and older adults; care for garden, seeds and animals; and, in some cases, in community work as leaders in their communities or organizations or exercising some traditional role in their community. Work and care overload that takes time away from training and participation in community activities:

In this territory, one of the difficulties is that many of these women who are leaders are also mothers and housewives. So, for example, if there is a meeting that is in Chonchi and that means for the island women to spend a day, perhaps a day and a half outside their house, and due to the movement of the boats, they do not go, they cannot attend, because they are busy with tending to the animals, raising children, making food for the husband. Because that woman who is a leader is also like the leader of the entire structure of her home. *Pamela Zúñiga.*

Difficulties that increased during the times of pandemic, since they had to connect and assist to sons and daughters during virtual classes, in areas with limited internet access:

It is very difficult for people to stop doing what they do, especially for all mothers who have to connect their children to classes, have to cook, clean, participate in meetings, then, it is very difficult, it is very hard. *Leticia Caro.*

Overload that implies a lot of physical and emotional exhaustion, and for women linked to leadership, political and community responsibilities that they must assume:

We don't give anymore. So finally somehow we work, we are letting our guard down for different reasons: because we have to walk the land and to feed, then, the new leadership comes and we have to guide them, and they are falling behind, and there we are. The oldest leaders are still there pushing the boat. Slowly we go, anyway, because we are in time for, imagine now, elections. We are one way or another trying to occupy those spaces to be able to empower ourselves more. *Pérsida Cheuquenao.*

Undervalued and underpaid work

Despite the heavy and multiple tasks they perform, they are rarely made visible, recognized and remunerated:

How do we make visible the work of a woman seashore collector in her environment?, in her community?, in the family? How does it emotionally affects us as women to have to be making all these requests and having to deal with your family, with all the economic and family burden that you carry, and with all this burden imposed by the State because it frustrates you a lot, when the only thing you want is to protect your area, all you want is to be able to work in peace, to be able to move in the sea where you grew up, where you got the sustenance to bring food to your son, without a sailor coming and telling you: “Your papers?” [...] That of men is a sacrificial job, but those men recognize it, men are the fishermen, those who work, those who sail, bring sustenance, but they have their plans to apply for diving teams, for boats, for improvement. And who knows the women of the sea? Nobody knows them. And we the women of the sea make a fire early, we leave the children in bed so that they don't get up and at dawn we go to collect and get water, because it is not always the tide and the algae are left out, you have to get into the water, and that sacrifice of getting into the water when it's cold and then load all that and dry it, and then get upstairs to your house, and see that your children have already woken up and you have to give them breakfast, it's tremendous. And many of the women I know are single mothers who have the sporadic support from their children's parents, and they live off of this, and then they go out to sell, they leave their community to work in the fisheries, to work in the city because if not, they have no livelihood. And for them, where is the health system? There is none. For them, where is this ease to be able to apply for a project that allows them to be at home with their family and not have to go somewhere else? There isn't. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Lack of training and education opportunities

Gap linked to knowledge and access to the information necessary to make a decision and influence collective processes. Knowledge that women access to a lesser extent, because in many cases training and education are linked while they have time to train in technical aspects related to the Ecmpo or about knowledge of their rights. Time that is scarce due to the work and care overload they face:

I think that what has always been most difficult for me, at least, is to reach all information, manage all information. Because it is a job of many years, therefore, obviously in a couple of years you will not understand the entire Ecmpo process. *Mirtha White.*

Which also affects fewer opportunities to access qualified work and lower employment rates, which in the case of Indigenous women represents 44.4% compared to 63.8% of Indigenous men (Casen, 2017).

Limitations on access to the sea and resources

Due in many cases to the loss of the link with the sea of the new generations of women:

The other thing that also happens is that women today, compared to women who are older, have later or never gotten on a speedboat, they have gotten on a boat. I have seen many *lamngen* (women) who cannot contribute to the Ecmpto with their experience at sea because they do not have it. They have completely disconnected. The ones who still sail and those of us who do it because we are stubborn, we can still say: “Look, when we navigate this area, there are currents there, there is this, there is that”, we still know the marine territory. But of those will be ten percent here on the island, we are very few. And the women, those who have that knowledge of the routes and everything are already old women, they are older, they are just in their houses, we are not going to be asking them to go out to meetings or things where they can be cold. That is the difficulty we have: today’s youth, I would say that people up to, I don’t know, thirty-something, have disengaged in that sense from navigation. Yes, they have the knowledge of the beach shore, but not in navigation, and they can no longer contribute to the Ecmpto. Fortunately, I managed to have that. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

This leads to some traditional roles that women played at sea, such as being sailors, they are being lost due to access difficulties to connect with the sea, due in many cases to the formal requirements to exercise these jobs, which do not have a gender focus or facilities for women:

A debt that we are going to have with the elders is that we are not going to reach that level. But it is also the fault of the processes, because they have restricted us many times. I still go out without permission, I just go out like that. So, all those things, and when we take the kids too, we all get into the boat like pirates, and if the patrol boat appears, we have to hide. All this happens in the Ecmpto. And the Ecmptos for us are like vindicating a little of what has been taken from us with the passing of time, because we almost disappeared from history. *Leticia Caro*.



Yohana Coñuecar shares with women gathered in the Amotuy Ruka community area



Indigenous Women Network for the Defense of the Sea, Pichicolo.

What becomes even more complicated in the context of the climate crisis that impacts, in some cases, the activities carried out mainly by women such as shore collection:

With this climate change, *luga* is no longer here, like I got out of my home and I'm going to collect; We are already going to where the wells are, or the current carried there, and it is very far from my house, and you will understand that carrying a 30 or 40 kilogram bag and walking that entire beach, sinking into the sand, is tremendously tiring. So, it is a problem for us not being able to access these resources. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Lack of economic resources and essential services

Which is expressed in higher rates of poverty by income and multidimensional for Indigenous women, which are respectively close to 18% and 30% compared to 11% and 20% of non-Indigenous women (Rimisp, 2017), and that puts them in conditions of greater vulnerability and greater difficulties in becoming empowered as social actors:

We need to position ourselves more, and to position ourselves we lack resources. All of us experience that, the will is there, but one stops there because you don't have any more money to go out. For example, I, currently, of course, I am a Lafkenche leader, but a leader in quotes because now I am no longer a leader, but I am just a participant, and from my community, I turned down the leadership so that others can follow, others have to go. But now, how do I continue contributing so that my people advance and do not lose their way? As a Lafkenche organization, let's say. I cannot, I do not have money. I have to maintain my house too. Imagine, so many years and they have always confronted me: "Wow, so many years as a leader, you traveled to so many countries and you don't even have a vehicle." But I am a mom, I am a farmer, I am an agent, I am a leader, from where do I get money to have a vehicle? *Pérsida Cheuquenao.*

Which puts them in a more unfavorable condition to promote the processes of Ecmpto request:

We start the entire Ecmpto process without a penny. We start mapping by moving with our own money and going to the different places, because they are all far from everything, to collect the information of the people who sailed. And it was a very long job, like a year, only with our own resources. Also with the collaboration of a biologist and a geographer who were present there, that did not charge us anything. And there are no resources, we don't have resources for anything, everything is self-management. All is self-ma-

nagement because here everyone works for their family, that's why we have to understand the Kawésqar. It is difficult, when that structure exists, to try to get money for this kind of thing. I remember once we had to put in the protection resource so that our Ecmpto is admitted for processing, and there we all met and raised the money between all of us, and we paid the notary, which was about 80 *lucas* (thousand Chilean pesos). And I think that is what we have spent the most money raising. *Leticia Caro*.

Or to boost their economic initiatives:

For implementation, especially of a greenhouse for drying, for example, of the seaweed. How can we deal with the impact of not having financing, and with the issue that all these areas as they are of the Navy, they do not allow greenhouses to be freely built where one can say: "There was a good tide, we got plenty of *luga* and we were able to dry." So, why are we going to get wet and take out *luga* if it's going to rot? So, you see a shortcoming deep down, a lack of resources in the community to be able to face these changes. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

And in relation to the lack of essential services, they point out the lack of access to health as one of their main concerns, since they do not have a health insurance and labor protection system for adequate development of their jobs at sea:

All this lack of implementation to protect, let's say, from the cold and everything, causes many people to have bone diseases, cystitis diseases in women because they are too cold; and we as collectors do not have a health system that works for us, that tells us: "They are going to have care or they can access this." The only way we treat health problems, whether due to cold or bone pain, is with the same algae or with herbs; just like you already went to harvest, it was very cold, changed clothes on the spot and had a hot drink or applied it. When the bones hurt a lot with changes of climate, they have their lotion for warmth, so that the bones don't hurt so much. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

Sexist practices and gender stereotypes

That there are still some leaders and organizations that prevent women from full participation in the Ecmpto:

In the territory you still see a lot of machismo, a lot of situations where the man dominates the woman, and yet that is not like that and it never was like

that in our ancestral culture. Before it was this balance, that *küime mongen*, that good life that allowed us as Indigenous peoples to maintain ourselves and live here in this place. So, I feel that one of the things that I have still been able to assess in this territory, is the presence that the women, if they are in those positions, are not as accepted as in the case there was a man carrying out those processes. *Ingrid White*.

Or which prevent women from leading processes, depriving them of support and recognition and making their work much more difficult:

Many times my meetings were cut short by the *lamngen* (men), my same *lamngen*, who are my neighbors. Or instead of moving forward, they cut off the meeting. So, that was a very ugly experience, very painful at the same time, because one works like a dog, one walks. I walked the entire coast, and sometimes also cried because I had no money, I had no support, and because I had to face everything, [because] in a community there is everything: there are Catholic churches, there are evangelical churches and there are also partisan politicians. And it was difficult, because I also had a baby to feed. But later, over time, when things are achieved it gives a tremendous satisfaction; it was worth crying, it was worth walking in the sun and in the rain. *Pérsida Cheuquenao*.

Sexist practices based on prejudices about the lack of capabilities in women:

There is a lot of prejudice that one is not going to be capable, that one is weak, a lot of things. Prejudices that are actually very similar to those in society also because deep down it is like “that’s it, and that woman will not have a home or she will not have children to take care of.” So, the fact that women participate is not seen as an integral position, and this must be changed, because clearly women today have a lot to say and a lot to contribute. *Ingrid White*.

However, the women of the Ecmpto have been confronting machismo, denouncing, raising their voices and empowering themselves, although they recognize that the issue is more difficult to address with older generations:

I see that it is a bit complicated, because the woman who is older than you, I am talking about women 50 or 60 years old, they come with that mentality of not daring to say the things. But not all are like this, as I come from one generation that does not have that taboo. If I feel something, I think something, I’m not going to be ashamed to say in front of the Ecmpto assembly

that I think this is bad, this seems good to me. A 50 or 60 year old woman is going to have that respect or shame for saying what she thinks. That age difference is noticeable. *Patricia Avendaño.*

Lack of intersectional gender focus

The lack of an intersectional gender approach in the accreditation procedure of trades and permits for activities that can be carried out at sea prevents considering the multiple inequalities and discriminations that women from coastal areas must face, both for being women and for being Indigenous peoples, and at the same time from coastal and marine areas in rural areas. This prevents addressing the various inequalities they face and considering a procedure of accreditation that includes the specificities that they bring as Indigenous women of coastal areas, in order to ensure the full exercise of their practices and customary uses at sea:

That we should be facilitated considering all the work that we do, because they tell the man to go take their exam, and the man just goes, but women have children, we have school, and the schedules don't match ours. We can learn, we can study a lot, we can even work with the husband, but they mention tests and the tests take so many hours, and with your son at school, how can you do it? Or they ask you to go take the diving exam and, for example, you were in the group for the next day, how do you do it with your son? If your husband is working, and who knows for how many hours. So, those are problems that we talk about and we need this government at some point to realize that there are also female sea workers and that we need to be accredited. Because the knowledge is there, but the difficulty is at the moment that we have to go take the tests. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

In addition to this, the requirements established for the accreditation of trades establish a certain age to be recognized as artisanal fishermen and women, leaving out older adult women who still carry out these activities:

At least in artisanal fishing there is age equality; a 60 year-old person already would not be able to go fishing and would be limited from working. And it should not be like that, because the person is able, and even better because it is an activity for oneself and the person is active, doing things. *Eduvina Leutún.*





Eduvina Leutún, Haydée Aguila, Genoveva Neculman and Inés Guerrero in Caleta Pichicolo.

And without these accreditations they cannot count on the nautical documents to navigate or acquire a boat, which prevents not only their relationship with the sea, but also ensuring economic support:

We found out which people had a boat and we realized that there are three people who have a boat, but only one can navigate. As women, some of us have to have nautical documents to be able to navigate, because today we do not have that freedom. So, participation and our activity on the sea are greatly reduced. And of course, there is no such balance between women and men, there are more men who have the possibility. And within the community, three families have boats and one sails, there are other men who have this certificate of navigability and can embark on other boats, and can work in artisanal fishing, for southern king crab and fake king crab. *María Luisa Muñoz.*

Which in the long run creates gender segregation for some of the jobs on the sea, such as being a boat captain, navigator, fisher and diver:

The segregation of roles is imposed on you by the State through which you have to have cards for such and such things, but within the community one understands that, if the husband goes sailing and does not have an assistant, the wife accompanies him and the children, if they are older, also go to the boat. If you have to work, you work, if you have to get on the boat, if you have to get on the motorboat, the woman goes with her husband and her children, but there is this risk that the State is not going to allow you that. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Well, if these requirements and limitations did not exist, women would be exercising the trades linked to the sea in a more equitable way with men.

Invisibility of demands and proposals

This prevents these issues that are crucial for Indigenous women and people from being addressed. This situation, they point out, occurs, for example, in political parties, which respond more to political and programmatic interests and not to priorities and proposals of Indigenous peoples or Indigenous women:

There begins the issue of all the institutional obstruction, all the obstruction from the system that today tells us to participate here; political participation, for example, and our lamngen (women) kind of divert, because they have to participate in political parties to become, for example, a councilor;

it's like losing a little of our aspirations as a woman, to be able to get there, to be able to control our area. [...] But how do we contribute there? How do we work? That's the issue. How is our territory going to be controlled, is it going to be managed or is it going to be as we wanted in this law [Law on Ecmpto], in the spirit of the law? And there is great work there because we no longer give more. Today everyone is worried about what I want to be, about taking a political position, but I forget my base. Because also the system of this current Constitution hinders you, ties you, because if you are a councilor and you are thinking about how to support your community, you don't have time. *Pérsida Cheuquenao*.

The fact that specific places for women are not taken into account in decision-making and governance in response to the roles they play in the community or in the Ecmpto prevents women from being able to make proposals from their realities and needs:

The thing is that they had a secretary who had been around for a long time and that person, due to the fact that he dedicated himself to other things, resigned and they looked for another secretary who offered himself at some meeting, then, that secretary does not work for nothing. And one day, in a conversation with my father-in-law and another leader, I told them: "Well, I could help you if you want." So I said: "Now, I'm going to help them." And I stayed and they discussed and accepted me as secretary, because this was the same through a vote by the organizations that make up the Ecmpto, and they approved me being as secretary and I stayed. *Patricia Avendaño*.

Finally, and despite the gaps that we have pointed out, women in coastal areas communities continue to highlight the importance of their participation in the Ecmpto to ensure effective governance of the sea and territory.

The greatest participation that we find of women in coastal areas occurs at the community and local level, and not so much in organizations beyond the local or communal level, nor in State institutions linked to the management of Ecmpto, nor in the academic field or research on the Ecmpto:

Although till now there have been various entities that make decisions regarding the Marine and Coastal Areas, these power roles are generally exercised by men. So, men decide for women and in one way, well imposed, so to speak. [...] Women have the role as leaders but in smaller systems, mostly community organizations. However, throughout the organizations,

and State policy, we still see that there is no gender equality or parity. So the perspective of the man is very present, and of course the Western vision, which is a more patriarchal vision. *Ingrid White*

Therefore, ensuring equal participation or equal conditions in all areas linked to the Ecmpto will allow us to address the gaps that women face in their participation, reflecting on the challenges that they still have to face, such as determining the role of women and their participation in the request, management and administration of the Ecmpto:

The fact that there are women leaders positions us to say: “Women are also here, we are also present here and we also have a voice, we have thoughts, we have a way of relating, ways of life.” And that is valuable, because it means that women are currently more concerned about what is happening in nature or in the environment, in the sea, on land. *Ingrid White*.

Strategies

Although the difficulties and challenges in women’s participation are a constant that we find throughout the country, each territory has specificities that respond to its own context and the concrete reality of each people, and some of these circumstances have allowed greater participation of women in some territories:

In the history of this territory there was a massacre in 1712 during which the order of the Spanish was to kill the men, children, the elderly, adults, but only men, and that generated the formation of matriarchies. Then, in the last century, with this issue of shearing, men went to work in Patagonia and the woman raised the children. I know a neighbor who is 94 years old and she said that she gathered shellfish, fished, made fences, took care of the animals, planted, the eldest daughter raised animals [...] and so on all her life was strong. So as a very strong matriarchal structure that I couldn’t say is feminism, I could say that it is still a part of machismo because deep down the man just ignored it, because the woman was transformed into a superwoman capable of doing it all. *Pamela Zúñiga*.

Likewise, despite the various gaps that women face, some territories have achieved greater participation of women in different community settings and have managed to generate empowerment processes:

To be very honest, the issue of participation within the community is more powerful for women. We women are the ones who participate the most, the woman is the one who decides, the one who gives her opinion, so maybe we have seen that in this decision-making and being able to say things, too. I think that happens a lot here, the women are the most active, the ones who organize themselves in some way to be able to exist, understanding that they have a house, they have a family, some also work. So, there are plenty of things, but in some way they organize themselves and they are the ones who participate the most. *María Luisa Muñoz.*



Pérsida Cheuquenao Aillapan. Knitting hands. Calbuco, marzo 2023.

To achieve this, some actions or strategies are mentioned that have helped strengthen their participation as women from coastal areas:

Organizational

Faced with a problem, they can articulate and organize among themselves to face it seeking common well-being. This is facilitated in territories with strong family and community structures:

Getting together and talking is equally energizing somehow, because sometimes one is very tired of doing things and you see very active people who want to do things, to make us get up again and organize ourselves in some way and do something for the community. *María Luisa Muñoz.*

And they said: “You know what, we are going to form a union of all our women throughout Chile who belong to or are developing in that area.” And so, two years ago, the National Union of Agricultural Salaried Workers and Sea Workers was founded. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Dialogue

Address their situation and problems as Indigenous women through dialogue, but one that comes from their knowledge and worldview as Indigenous peoples:

Because that is very important, a dialogue, but a dialogue not from a perspective of power, but dialogues that are horizontal, between people, and that are open to many topics. But at the same time trying to be constant in that organizational work, which I feel that there’s still much to do, in how we strengthen ourselves, but not from the *huinca raquizuam* (Western thought), but from the Mapuche *raquizuam* (Mapuche thought). *Ingrid White*

Women’s exchange networks

Participate in exchanges of knowledge, experiences and resistance processes between women, who can contribute to the processes they are promoting in their territories:

This is how we have learned about the work, for example, of the *lamngen* that make *charqui* in Valparaíso, which is an organization of women who make *charqui* and repair nets; we have known the work of the low tide, which are *lamngen* who are dedicated to the work of collection and proces-

sing, whether for jams or these *cochayuyo* sachets, their strength is *cochayuyo*; we have been able to make visible the work of the *lamngen* who work with *pelillo* in the Puerto Montt area; and I have told you about the work we do medicinally and collecting algae here in my community. We are just starting, but our idea, our dream as a union is that we can fight for these women's rights work and be more involved in navigation. Because the few *lamngen* from Caldera sail a lot. We get together with them and there are female divers, there are female diving assistants, and until now they are the only ones that are organized. So we have women playing roles that are generally attributed to men. *Ingrid Echevarría*.

I believe that we are not experiencing all these processes alone [...] I had a lot of encounters with other groups of people when I traveled. For example, they invited us to activities in Puerto Cisne, in Icalma too, and it has been a lot of experience getting to know about these advances and how we generate these networks that are still maintained over time. So, we are not alone; if we need people to support us, they are always there. *María Luisa Muñoz*.

Empowering

Supporting women by training them about their rights and strengthening their self-esteem is undoubtedly a fundamental resource to help empower them and raise their voice in the context of various discriminations and inequalities they face:

Because now one can raise one's voice, and one can complain to the people that it is no longer like before, when one remained submissive, not now, because one brings out one's voice, somehow they listen to it. *Eduvina Leutún*.

Address what motivates women to participate [...] Raise awareness because everyone wants to participate, but if you think that I don't have the capacity, it's better not to move forward, but I need to know that I have that capacity, that is where support is required. *Pérsida Cheuquenao*.



Continuity of protection and defense of the sea: the role of the Indigenous youth

Indigenous youth are the ones in charge of continuing the work, the visions and strengthening of the coastal and marine areas of their towns. That is why, in all territories, there is an opportunity and a challenge to involve them and encourage their active participation, in order to guarantee that political processes and governance of the sea and the territory continue over time:

I believe that the role of young people is going to become much more relevant. And they are also understanding that in the end, these processes in which we are engaging today, leading, fighting, they will have to continue them. And surely they are going to be fighting about other things, demanding other things, because, understanding that there are things we can achieve, we will always be in a constant fight, to defend our rights and maintain the legacies. Therefore, they will receive that job in some way and they will also have the power and the desire to carry it out and continue working. *María Luisa Muñoz.*

Being the generational change of the community will ensure the continuity of the ancestral knowledge and the processes of struggle from the territories:

I believe that they are learning from us and they also have to continue fighting the same fight with the same wisdom that we are doing. Because if not, it wouldn't make any sense. *Eduvina Leutún.*

Contributions and strengths of the new generations

The contributions and strengths that the new generations bring to the work and governance of the Ecmpos, include, among others:

Connecting different types of knowledge

Young people have the ability and ease of connecting ancestral knowledge of the people and the concept of EMCPO, regulations and technical processes of the institutionality of the State:

They handle both languages, because this issue of the Marine and Coastal Areas of Indigenous Peoples has two languages: a technical, legal language, which is very complicated for the leaders of communities that have other type of wisdom, and the ancient language and knowledge. In other words, there are many leaders who have this ancient knowledge, with which they can defend and develop, but they fall short on the technical issue. On the other hand, these young people have both or they can work with their elder leaders so that they validate them and give them more strength or more conviction, so that support for defense is more convincing. *Pamela Zúñiga.*

Education and critical vision

Greater access to formal education compared to older generations, which has helped them to have a critical and reflective vision of the internal processes:

I believe that the strength that our young people have today is that they have had access to education, to a Westernized vision of education, we should not get rid of it, nor should we praise the educational system so much because it is not the best, they are also the generation that did not receive intercultural education. Therefore, we are also lacking there; however, nowadays young people are very critical and expressive, so I think that is a strength. The fact that young people can see things from another perspective and critically is also important because that strengthens the organization, because not everything is beautiful or nice, always we need to receive criticism, but constructive criticism. *Ingrid White.*

Access to digital information

Greater access and management of digital media and technology, which allows them to use them as tools that contribute to their struggles or to the strengthening of their identity:

Young people today have access to information and knowledge. Nowadays information is a 'click' away, so to speak. So, that information and all that knowledge regarding, even a biological ban, for example, is on the internet.

Those are tools or means with which we can empower young people, but young people must also empower themselves from their spirituality, because it is something that they do not practice, many of them do not practice spirituality. *Ingrid White.*

Communicate and disseminate information

The use of alternative media and social networks to spread the word about the reality of their people is a tool that young people generally use, and from which they have been supporting their communities, organizations and people:

The way they spread the information. The dissemination is made by the young people, yes. *Pérsida Cheuquenao.*

This is why, many times, young people have the dissemination tasks in organizations and territories.

Commitment and pride in their identity

Although, in some cases it is pointed out that there is a lack of greater commitment on the part of the young people, in most cases their involvement and responsibility are highlighted, which bring vitality and validity to their fighting processes:

In the case of our communities, which are communities that in a way are being reborn from being invisible, we have to recover on all fronts; and in that sense young people, especially when we have had to go out to defend our areas, they are the first there arguing with their canvases and everything. And that is an activity that really has to be valued because it is important, because it shows an active society. If you feel that something is not yours, you are not going to defend it, it will not matter to you. *Leticia Caro.*

That goes hand in hand with greater recognition, appreciation and pride in identity, that has been occurring with greater force in recent years:

Nowadays young people feel very proud to be Yaganes, and they do not feel discriminated against as they did before, they are very empowered. I am referring to young people of 20 years old, of 17, 18 years old, but I also see a new generation that is around 13, 10 years old too, and others 9 years old, so, there is all a scale where the little ones are the most participatory, they are the ones who go everywhere at meetings, even if it's just to eat, but they

are there, they still understand who they are. They know perfectly well who they are. They defend themselves constantly, they know how to talk about their territory, they have it very clear. *María Luisa Muñoz.*

Strength is this pride that they do not feel discriminated against like we felt at some point. That they do not have that fear and that they do not have to feel that shame that we felt, to the point of even arriving crying at your house because they made fun of you in such a way. They don't, on the contrary, they feel proud that they are Mapuche, that if they don't have the last name, my mom has it, my dad has it, my grandfather has it. But they feel proud. So, that pride and not having to walk like almost hiding is a tremendous strength for them because it will give them that power to stand up anywhere and demand their rights knowing from where they are. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Recovery and revitalization of tradition

Young people have brought dynamism and revitalization to their cultures, supporting positioning the ancestral in new contexts, which includes the roles of traditional authorities, knowledge, crafts, games, among others:

Here, we *werkenes* (messengers) are young, it means that we young people have other ideas. [...] My president is also young. And so we realize that we are rescuing a lot of the traditional ways, that is not like in the past at the meetings: president, secretary, treasurer, but that people recognize who are their *lonkos*, who are their *werkenes* in their territories, and who enforce those ancestral authorities. So generally younger people in this awakening are the ones recognizing who are the wisest to exercise the role of *lonko* (authority), *werken* (messenger), *nguillatufe* (authority linked to the nguillatun ceremony). *Ingrid Echevarría.*

In the past, I would say that most of our leading ancestors always thought about how we are going to improve and what we are missing in the houses, for projects to improve the house or projects to improve the headquarters, but seeing situations like this; on the other hand, we the young *werkenes* say: "Let's get together to play sports," and we play *palín*, we play *linao*, some traditional sport, play instruments. [...] So, those children that we are teaching today to play instruments or play are the future leaders. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Challenges for the new generations

On the other hand, young people also face various challenges and risks in their defense of their collective rights and in their role of generational handover in protection of coastal areas:

Long-term change processes

It implies an important challenge for young people; since they point out that they are the ones who have greater impetus and expectation of achieving changes immediately or in the short term:

We are so eager to protect our area, to have it valued, I believe that is the root of our suffering, we want to change the mindset. We have so much desire, so much impetus, that we want to work and to have the results now, and that is not the case. [...] That is something that plays against us because we have to realize that, if we do not continue to persevere and we give up, that's it. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Knowledge, wisdom and ancestral trades

Understand that there is no one system of knowledge above another, valuing the real importance of one's own knowledge and wisdom, especially when these are being lost:

That pride of being Lafkenche people, of being a community, is lost, because they see that the person who works at sea, the person who works in the field, as if that person has no knowledge, as if the person were ignorant, because nowadays studying at the university is valued more than ancestral knowledge. And that has also caused so many young people to go to the city, emigrate from the countryside and not know the territories. *Ingrid Echevarría.*

Opportunities in the territory

Many young people who go out to train outside the communities do not return to contribute to their territories for the benefit of their community, due to the few job opportunities that exist for them; which undoubtedly implies a challenge for the community and communal authorities, not only in motivating and engaging them in their struggle, but also in supporting them and generating opportunities to work in the territory, and that is where Ecmpto can become an opportunity for young people:





**COMUNIDADES
KAWÉSQAR
POR LA DEFENSA
DEL MAR**

Tamara White, Tamara Vidal (Mapuche), and Nayadeth Vargas (Kawésqar) for the defense of the sea.

Apart from the fact that they also emigrate when they go to study, and they don't come back, especially on the islands you see that a lot, too. *Rocío Colivoro*.

There are few who stay to be able to contribute nowadays, but will they be here later on? Because, for example, we have people now, some of the most active and committed, one studying law, the other studying nursing and so on, but they are studying for their communities, because of all the problems involved in claiming the territory and the right of access and use, then they educate themselves. We have to support them, so that they return to us. For example, within the Atap community, which is in charge of recovering the weaving, those who are doing it are precisely the young people, they are doing that. In the Aswal Lajep community, those who are recovering the ancestral medicine are also young people. And all of these combine, that is, I am an administrator of the Ecmpto, the other of the revitalization, the other, I don't know, of the recovery of the languages, the other of the stories, etc. *Leticia Caro*.

Radical positions

They do not establish meetings or contributions to the construction of collective processes:

And very radical too, some young people say: "Yes, I contribute," but with a very radical, very fundamentalist position, that is shocking. *Pérsida Cheuquenao*.

However, the need and importance of bringing in young people to the processes of claiming the rights and processes of territorial and identity reconstruction, recognizing their contributions and having various proposals and initiatives to support their leadership and strengthen their participation, are becoming increasingly relevant:

We have talked about it many times, it is always the appeal for attention when going to the *trawün* on the islands, the leaders always ask that the young people go, we always echo that. It seems necessary. *Pamela Zúñiga*.

Which undoubtedly implies a task of preparation and training for the new generations:

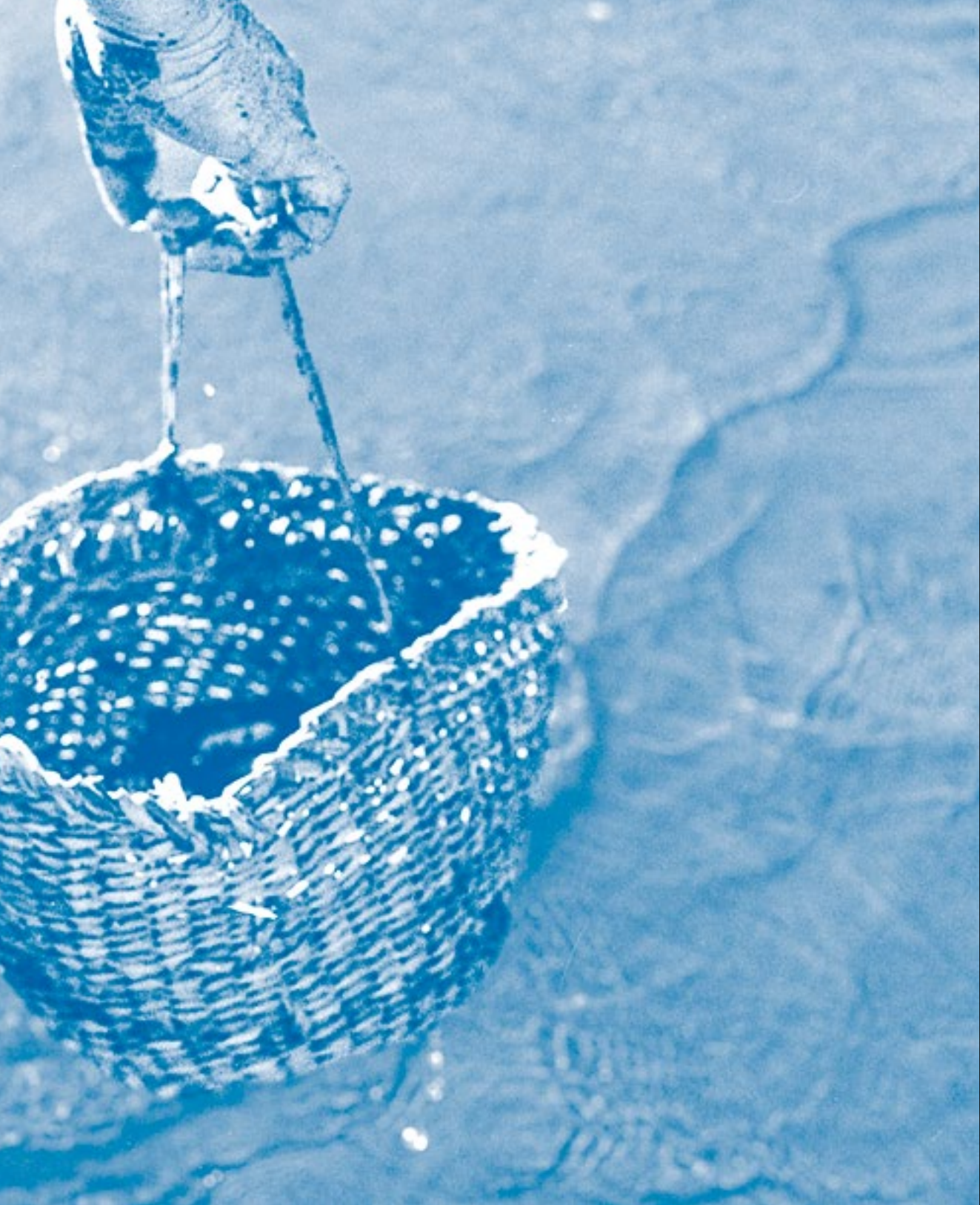
There are young people who are very grounded in reality, in the processes of land, of cultural revitalization, however, there is much to do there because we

remember that young people are also a generation that needs to strengthen itself, and the adults, and the children, too. *Ingrid White.*

To start involving young people, it's up to the adults to give them the opportunity to join, to come together, not just tell them: "No, you are too young, you can't give your opinion" or "No, you can't do this" or "What are you going to know?" I think that's why they don't have much participation from young people. *Rocío Colivoro.*

And young people are also increasingly aware of the importance of joining community processes, and motivate other young people:

We as young people must introduce other young people, too, to explain that to them. Because there are some who are afraid to ask or say: "No, they're going to call me ignorant," or things like that. But at least I, when someone asks me something: "Hey, what does it mean? I remembered you and I think you know this word" and things like that, then I start to explain more and I go deeper, and then they are motivated to continue learning. They say "I always liked this, thank you for teaching me", I think that's how to explain to them also the experience that we have within the community. *Rocío Colivoro.*



Final thoughts and recommendations

The Indigenous peoples who inhabit the coastal areas, islands, archipelagos and canals throughout Chile are sea people that maintain a close and deep relationship with these areas, where they have been forging their culture, practices, ways of subsistence and knowledge. They are diverse people—Chango, Rapa Nui, Mapuche (Lafkenche, Huilliche), Kawésqar and Yagán—who inhabit also diverse ecosystems, and who, through this close and deep relationship, have been shaping over time their worldview and their own forms of organization, management and governance of the territories. From these biocultural diversities they approach, understand and give sense to each ‘Marine and Coastal Areas of Indigenous People’ or Ecmpos. These are areas where the life of each seaside people is developed and guaranteed; and for whom, from their worldview and spirituality, the sea constitutes a living being and a protective force that drives them to continue protecting and defending their environment, just as life is defended and protected.

Women claim Ecmpos as a strategy for cultural revaluation, internal strengthening, protection of territories and above all the valorization of the knowledge, uses and roles that they exercise in those areas; understanding Ecmpos as a dynamic concept nourished with the realities, knowledge and worldviews of the women and men who live, protect and resist in these places. Highlighting the fundamental role of women as defenders of the territory, the sea and the common goods, as well as those mainly responsible for the transmission of knowledge regarding these environments, exercising a micropolitics linked to the daily life of its territories and the sea.

Indigenous women play key roles in coastal and marine areas, which are often shared and complemented with those of men. Among these identified are those related to the jobs they do at sea; the traditional ones like *lawentuchefe* or spiritual authorities, associated with the leadership in their communities

and those linked to the management of the Ecmpto. These different roles are being carried out by women in a complementary way and among all they provide a dynamic that allows progress towards territorial governance.

In the same way, the customary uses carried out by Indigenous women harmoniously link sea activities with land activities, integrating them into their productive models. And through the different customary roles and uses that they carry out, they provide important contributions to the social, cultural and political development of their people, to strengthening and integration of their organizations, to sustainable conservation of common goods, and to the family, local and community economy of their people and territories.

The participation of women in the Ecmpto is significant, but it remains unequal and depends on several factors, such as the territorial context and their level of training and empowerment; as well as the various gender gaps that they must face because they are women and belong to Indigenous peoples, such as assuming multiple workloads, due to their work at the sea, housework, family and community care work and often their leadership roles. It is also noticed that the greatest participation of women in the Ecmpto occurs at the communal and territorial level, but not in decision-making beyond the local level. This makes it urgent to address the gaps that limit effective participation of women in the Ecmpto, since their participation is fundamental, as they are key actors in these areas that actively contribute to the political, social, cultural, spiritual, environmental and economic development of their people, as well as the defense and governance of the sea.

This shows the lack of an intersectional gender approach, which considers the multiple discriminations faced by women from coastal areas, for being women, and for belonging to Indigenous peoples. An example of this is that the requirements, permits and accreditations of the various jobs at sea do not consider the specificities and diverse realities faced by the Indigenous women who inhabit the Ecmpto, which prevents the exercise of some trades that have been traditional for them, and generates a marked division of roles between men and women, a division which does not occur naturally in practice. Furthermore, this affects the relationship between the sea and the women and girls from coastal areas, who cannot accompany their parents, preventing the intergenerational transfer of knowledge.

Almost 15 years after the law that created the 'Marine and Coastal Areas of Indigenous Peoples' came into effect, this regulation constitutes a tool

increasingly used by the Indigenous peoples of the sea for the defense and protection of their territories and marine areas, and as an opportunity to advance in the governance of coastal areas and in an effective recognition of their territorial rights. However, its implementation has not been without difficulties. The testimonies of the women highlight the excessive bureaucracy for processing the Ecmpo and the multiple requirements and extensive time frames for approval (destination). Along with this, it is the lack of an intercultural approach from the public services involved to address Ecmpo requests, which prevents valuing and understanding the diversity of Indigenous peoples of the sea that inhabit Chile and the different historical processes and realities that they have lived. Also highlighting the misunderstanding of the concept of Ecmpo by some members of the communities and by non-Indigenous groups with whom they share the territory and the need to continue training and disseminating about this concept.

The involvement of young people from the early stages of the application of the Ecmpo becomes an increasingly crucial aspect to ensure the continuity in the governance and management of coastal and marine areas, and among their main strengths is being a 'bridge' between ancestral knowledge and the institutional and legal structure of the State, about which they know more than older generations; having access and greater knowledge of digital tools that can contribute to strengthening and spreading their voices and their struggles, in addition to being the generation that has received higher education and which has been strongly reclaiming its identity. Although young people also face great challenges, such as the lack of opportunities in the same territory.

General recommendations

1. Create spaces to reflect on the concept of Ecmpos from the view and perspective of the Indigenous women, in order to make visible their difficulties with the application processes and management. Know and collect their contributions and proposals regarding the implementation of the regulations of the Ecmpos, and the protection and governance of coastal and marine areas.
2. Value and recognize that ancestral use of coastal and marine areas carried out by the Indigenous peoples connects to a worldview which implicitly relates to the sustainability of resources, which allows the preservation of life forms and the cultural survival of Indigenous peoples.
3. Disseminate information about Ecmpos and train in simple, accessible, culturally and gender-relevant language, making visible the contributions of Indigenous women.
4. Decentralize training processes that seek to strengthen the capacities and leadership of Indigenous women from coastal areas, in order to involve those who, due to multiple tasks that they carry out, cannot leave their territories to be educated and trained.
5. Promote environmental education with an intersectional gender approach and with cultural and territorial relevance in the schools, technical education institutes

and universities collecting the contribution of the Indigenous women from Ecmpos.

Recommendations to the State

1. Modify the internal instructions of the National Corporation for Indigenous Development (CONADI) for processing and preparation of the reports on Invoked Customary Uses (Res. Ex. No.1220, 2015), so as to instruct in specifying the customary uses that are carried out exclusively or mainly by women, in order to make visible the contributions that they make in these areas from a gender perspective.
2. The public services in charge of the application of the Ecmpos Law, as the Undersecretary of Fisheries and Aquaculture, CONADI, Ministry of Social Development, General Directorate of Maritime Territory and Merchant Navy, must consider the diversity of Indigenous peoples who request Ecmpos, providing an approach differentiated by Indigenous peoples, with cultural, territorial and intersectional relevance of gender, in the procedures of request and approval of the Ecmpos, through guidelines or internal protocols that consider the historical, social and cultural context of the different Indigenous peoples.
3. Train the officials of the public services in charge of the application of the Ecmpos Law regarding the use of human rights approaches (with emphasis on the human

rights of Indigenous peoples), intersectional gender approach and intercultural approach, which allow them to identify the specific gaps and vulnerabilities that Indigenous women who inhabit coastal and marine areas face, and take measures to address them, such as the development and implementation of public policies and initiatives aimed to strengthen the participation and leadership of Indigenous women in a framework of gender equality; or securing services essential for Indigenous women who carry out activities and jobs at sea, especially those related to health and labor protection.

4. Generate and have statistical data on the Indigenous peoples of the sea and the jobs they carry out in the Ecmpto, disaggregated by gender, ethnicity and territory, in order to have the information necessary for establishing public and social policy.

5. Design public policies and programs that allow strengthening the food sovereignty of coastal communities, based on criteria of cultural relevance in the choice of food products and in the promotion of eating habits, including local seafood and from the land products, which Indigenous women in coastal areas gather and harvest.

6. Guarantee that the deadlines establishing the Ecmpto Law and its regulations for the processing and approval of a coastal and marine area are met. For this it is necessary to set up processes of administrative simplification to

reduce the barriers and burdens faced by Indigenous peoples of coastal and marine areas caused by excessive bureaucracy of public administration.

7. Ensure and implement public care policies with territorial, cultural and ethnic relevance that recognize and support the important family and community care work carried out by women from coastal and marine areas, in order to counteract the important gaps generated by the care work of Indigenous women, which limit their effective participation in the governance of the coastal and marine territories and areas.

8. Ensure that the requirements for being accredited for sea work have an intersectional gender approach and cultural relevance, in order to ensure that more women achieve accreditation in these trades and thus overcome the gap between men and women in sea occupations as divers or sailors, because women are very interested in these professions.

9. Secure financing and technical training to help women in coastal and marine areas achieve their endeavors linked to Ecmpto. As well as establish statistical measures that reveal the contribution of women and of the Ecmpto to local economies.

Recommendations to conservation organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia and research centers that work with Ecmpto

1. Ensure a comprehensive view of the territory and the Ecmpto as political, cultural, spiritual, economic and social areas in order to view them not only for the customary uses developed within them, or for the contribution to the conservation of the resources they provide, but also as areas that allow the self-determination and cultural survival of the people who inhabit them.
2. Articulate academic knowledge with the territory, developing training or specialization programs in Ecmpto, with the active participation of Indigenous women, highlighting the innovation and science that keep their ancestral knowledge, and generating exchanges from the various disciplines and systems of knowledge.
3. Generate interdisciplinary and intercultural dialogues about Ecmptos, including not only technical knowledge, but also ancestral knowledge. Promote dialogues between different knowledge and worldviews, respecting the specific processes, spaces and times of Indigenous peoples and women in order to reflect together and contribute to the challenges peoples and women

from coastal and marine areas face in the future.

Recommendations to organizations of Indigenous peoples

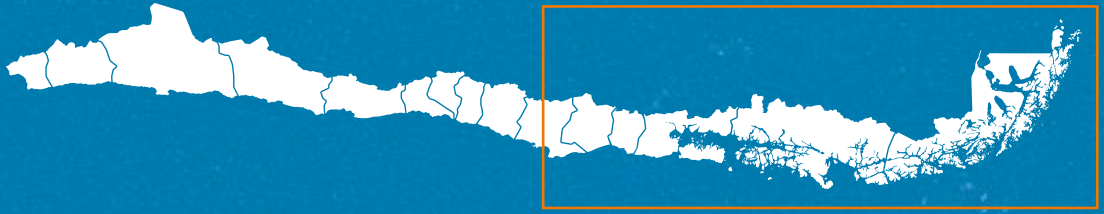
1. Strengthen and revitalize the roles, ancestral knowledge and spiritual practices that support the defense and protection of the sea, involving the young people in order to ensure the continuity of governance with identity in coastal and marine areas.
2. Make the role of Indigenous women visible in their work of transmission and care of the knowledge and worldview of their people. Valuing and promoting women's traditional knowledge related to the sea, taking into account that these are valuable contributions to society in general, and represent knowledge which contains the worldview of the sea people.
3. Include in training programs and training for Indigenous women, modules on rights, leadership and economic initiatives; as well as training in areas that prioritize women's work, through participatory methodologies and with an intercultural, gender and human rights approach.
4. Prioritize and strengthen the role of young people as an urgent generational change necessary to provide sustainability to their struggles, demands, development alternatives and governance in the Ecmpto.

5. Reflect on future challenges for women in the Ecmpto, with the active participation of Indigenous women. Addressing for example, how will the participation of women in the administration of the Ecmpto?, What roles will women assume? What opportunities are assured for them in the Ecmpto, or how can we advance towards an equal participation of women in the management plans of the Ecmpto?

6. Promote and generate spaces of exchange and articulation with other women of coastal areas, in order to generate interlearning and consensus on common topics that affect and strengthen them together with their advocacy work on common problems.

7. Support and encourage the articulation of women's networks, as a way of highlighting their inputs and contributions, as well as their specific needs and initiatives, in order to ensure that their initiatives and contributions complement men's initiatives. Because ensuring the governance of coastal areas cannot occur without the effective participation of women.





● Marcelo Travol Llanca II Indigenous community, Gorbea, Araucanía Region.

● Lafken Mapuche Indigenous Community, Pichicolo, Los Lagos Region.

● Amotuy Ruca Indigenous Community, Los Lagos Region.

● Admapu Ka Lafquen Indigenous community, Pichicolo, Los Lagos Region.

● Lafken Mapu Indigenous Community, Chiloé, Los Lagos Region.

● Mon Fen Indigenous community, Yaldad, Los Lagos Region.

● Quinchao, Province of Chiloé, Los Lagos Region.

● Caulín Bajo Indigenous community, Chiloé, Los Lagos Region.



Geographic location of the Ecmpo



Kawésqar Indigenous Community
Grupos Familiares Nómades del Mar (Sea Nomadic Family Groups),
Magallanes Region.

Yagán Indigenous Community of Bahía Mejillones,
Cape Horn, Region of Magallanes and the
Chilean Antarctica.

Part II

Ten Indigenous
women of the sea



Rosa Pérsida Cheuquenao Aillapán

Marcelo Travol Llanca II Indigenous community, Gorbea, La Araucanía Region.

Mapuche Lafkenche people

Illustration: Loreto Salinas

My name is Rosa Pérsida Cheuquenao Aillapán and since I was 14 years old I have been a leader in my community, in the commune of Teodoro Schmidt, in the La Araucanía Region. My late father was a leader there too, so I think in some way I continued his legacy. That's how I continued to lead the current group, the Marcelo Travol Llanca II community, located in the commune of Gorbea. As a leader I understand the spiritual role of *Mapuche kimche*, a wise person.

I am 51 years old and I have lived in Gorbea with my family for 15 years; We arrived in this area through a land subsidy. Therefore, we chose to divide the Indigenous community in Porma, first 24 left, then other 24, and so on. The community was acquiring more land subsidies. Here we bought 191 hectares through CONADI and we distributed them in 7 hectares for each one, so that we all had plains, Indigenous wood and Indigenous mountains.

This community has four subgroups of the same initial community. When we divided the lands the issue of *rewes*, places of renewal and ceremony, was considered a lot. Here people organize around the *nguillatún*, our spiritual ceremony, and the *eltún*, which is our cemetery. We Mapuche say *ka mapu ngetuai* (to another world we are leaving), nome *lafken ngetuai fey tañi am* (to the other side of the sea the soul goes).

But in Gorbea there is not enough capability or support to build a Mapuche organization like the one in which I participated before in the Teodoro area. I remember that in 1992, a Fisheries

and Aquaculture Law was created, where Indigenous communities were not considered, and our opinion was not taken into account. And it's still like that. They took our lands from us, they cornered us, whether to the hills, the heights or the sea. And yet they wanted to take away our sea area, our free access to it. So, we talked a lot with people to avoid it; we looked like Jehovah's Witnesses. We talked with representatives, farmers, participating in the *pichikeches*, the *machis*, the *weichafes*, the traditional authorities, telling them what was going on. They told us how they were going to take away our sea, if we were going to bathe and get the medicine from there.

Years later, my family participated in the creation of the Lafkenche Law; they were part of the administration plan of the Marine and Coastal Areas of Indigenous Peoples (Ecmpos) of that area. Our organization was called Newen Mapu Lafken. From there we began to discuss the reason for the law with many people, and thus they became aware of this situation and knew the territorial rights that must be cared for and protected.

Starting in 2000 I began to participate in the Lafkenche Territorial Identity organization, which I am still supporting. But at that time it was just a group of leaders who looked after the rights of the communities. In the case of my community of origin, for the right to the sea. In that aspect, the artisanal fishermen were the ones who opposed it the most, because they didn't understand the dynamics, they didn't understand why we defended the sea. Finally, we convinced them.

The positive thing about all this is that people took a stand. Now they are more autonomous in their decision, in their own organizing to carry out territorial control. At the moment we Lafkenche are doing well, but while in this pursuit the issue is how do we continue to contribute so as not to lose this momentum? Our expectation is that in the future we will be the ones who control our area.

I could be wrong, but I still see that there is a lack of valuing. We also lack resources. The will is there, but you stay there because you don't have any more money to go out. For example, I am a leader, in quotes, because I stepped down from the leadership so that others could follow. Others have to take over. So how do I continue to contribute so that my people advance and don't lose their way? I can't, I don't have money. I have to keep my house too.

In addition, there is managerial jealousy: "No, not you." Many times it happened to me that my own *lamgen*, my brothers, cut my meetings short. A very ugly, very painful experience, because you work like a dog, you walk. I walked all along the coast, and I was also crying because I had no support and because I had to face the entire community. There were the Catholic churches, evangelicals, politicians, parties... And it was difficult, because I also had a baby to feed. No, for me it was very hard. But later, over time, achieving these things gives a lot of satisfaction. It had been worth it crying and walking so much in the sun, in the rain.

In that sense, the role of women in this community is to define how things are going to be managed, how to administrate, establish responsibilities, etc. There we are. The oldest leaders continue to push the boat. We're going slow, anyway. The male leaders see the other part, the most immediate, the fastest. Instead, women give it another meaning, more slowly. We listen to the *ñañas* who need to make their *nguillatún* in the sea; from there they get their food, their algae, their ko, their water to bathe and to bathe their animals. They tell us: "When I have bad dreams, I look towards the sea so that it gives me the *newen*, it gives me purification, and gives me wisdom."

I relate the sea a lot with the *ñañas*, with the women who we are. Because we are the ones who raise, the ones who feed, the

ones who produce, and the sea, the land, is the same. Perhaps my *ngüinechen*, the regulating force, gave me an important essence to defend what is ours, to be able to survive. Because we are going to pass away, but our grandchildren, our children are going to live here and we have to protect our territory so that they can live well.

That is why we must continue to transmit this from generation to generation; socializing, raising awareness among our people. For example, in my territory they used to bring bottles, cans, garbage and just throw them on the beach. In the end, the sea will take them away, they will disappear; but it is not like that: the more waste the sea has, the less production we are going to get. We do not have the rocks anymore to bring the *luche*, because they died. We no longer have the rock to remove the *cochayuyo*, because they died. So how do we contribute? Taking care of the area, protecting it and trying to value the marine products that already exist.

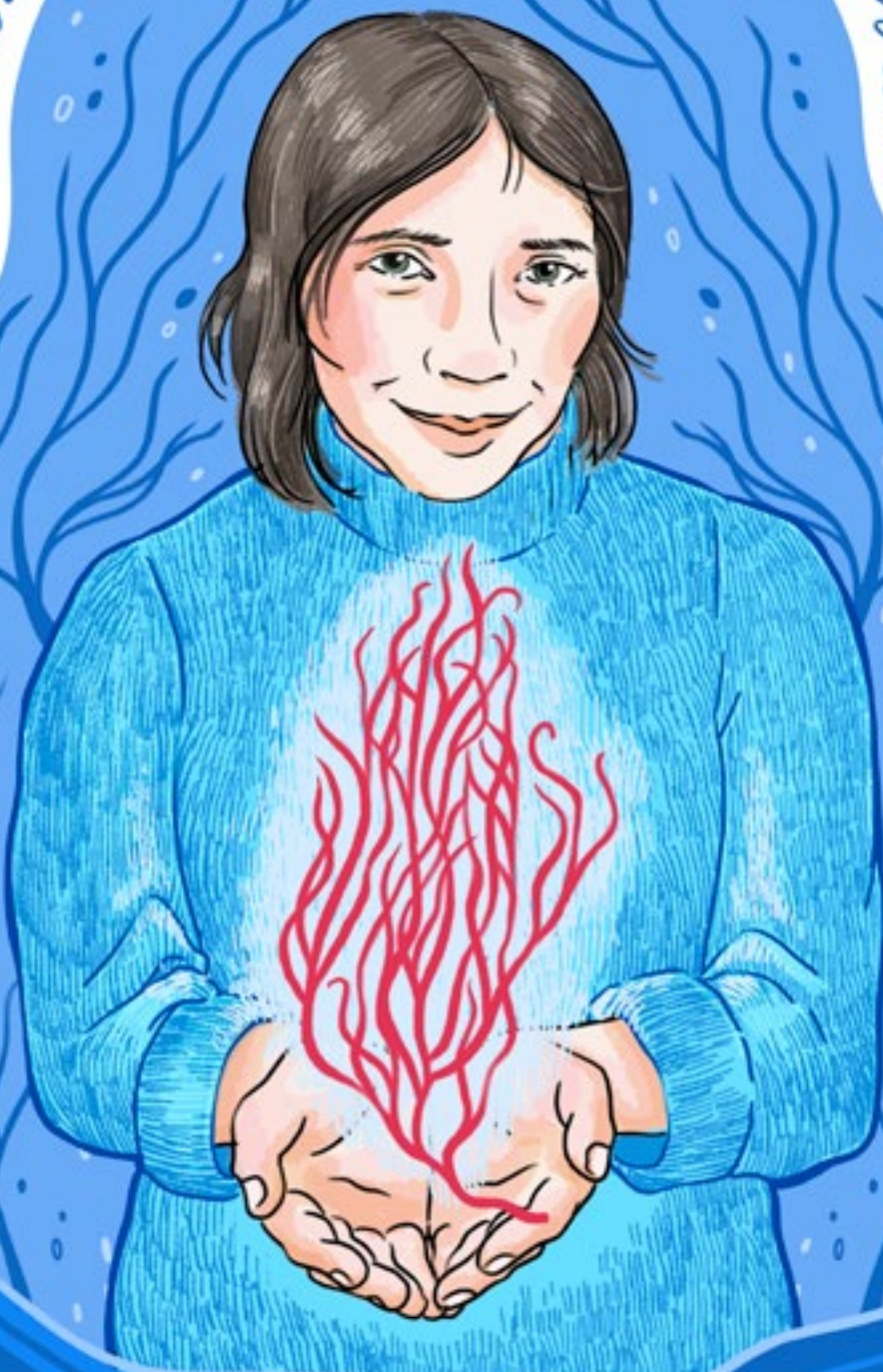
I would invite young people to participate more, but in a humble way. One always has to be humble, humility before all. Because if you are elected for a position, you have to assume it with responsibility and with great care. But today young people are interested just to earn money. They see money, only money. And some are also very radical, they want to contribute but from a very fundamentalist position: “My organization here, my organization there”, and that is not the case. You have to add, not subtract.



Rosa Pérsida Cheuquenao Aillapán

Marcelo Travol Llanca II Indigenous community,
Gorbea, La Araucanía Region.

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Patricia Avendaño

Indigenous community of Caulín Bajo, Chiloé, Los Lagos Region.

Mapuche Huilliche people

Illustration: Manuela Montero

My name is Patricia Avendaño, I belong to the Caulín Bajo community. Before getting married I lived in Ancud, south of Chiloé, but now I live in Caulín because my husband is from here. We have been married for about 17 years. We live in Caulín Bajo with our three children. My father-in-law belongs to the Indigenous community and he is part of the communities that are Ecmpto applicants, and since I am part of his family, I have the right to be there.

The nature, the beach and the bay stand out within our territory. Here you can see a lot of work in the extraction of products from the sea. There are a lot of people working on the *pelillo*, a red seaweed. We have gigantic low tides where one still can go to gather clams on foot. There are also conditions for tourism, but that has not yet been done. It would be interesting; there are natural seedbeds, birdwatching of migratory species and the beach is sometimes pink, full of flamingos and swans.

People are very linked to the sea and the land. The men go more diving and with the boats, while women take care of the gardens. But, on the shore, it is mostly women who collect shellfish and *pelillo*. They do it to get food for the house, to make a *curanto*, a *pulmay*. It's not for selling, it's for the family. In my case, when we sometimes go to collect shellfish, we all go: my husband, my children; from the youngest to the oldest.

Some people plant and work the *pellilo* to sell it, also with seafood. But there are only ten groups of families that see each other on the beach and they do it independently, not for a com-

pany. This is a fundamental contribution for their income. Before all that was too messy: the seedbeds were not respecting the birds' space and people were not aware when they extracted products that were undersized. Now, due to the Ecmpto, it has become quite organized. Essentially, the Ecmpto was born to protect our marine territory. There are fragile places that we have to take care of so that they continue to be repopulated.

Our experience with Ecmpto began ten years ago, thanks to one of the managers, my father-in-law, Don Francisco. He is one of the architects of the coastal border issue in Caulín, and all his family has been involved in this issue. At first no one thought what they said was important. It was difficult for them to make people understand that this was not a group of people trying to take over the beach, because that's what they believed. Over time the community began to realize that it was not so. Now they have realized that if they take care of their products, if, for example, this year they take out a sea urchin or see that there were small sea urchins, in two more years they will be repopulated again. Thus, little by little more people began to join.

A little over a year ago I joined the Ecmpto board of directors by chance. My father-in-law always kept us involved, he said: "The Ecmpto here, the Ecmpto there." One day, talking with him and another leader, he told me that the secretary who handled the paperwork had resigned. So, I told them that if they wanted I could help them. They spoke with the working group and a vote was carried out among the organizations that make up the team. They approved me as a secretary and I stayed.

In that working group, the majority of the leaders are men, except Mrs. Rudit Barría and me. There all the organizations that belong to the Ecmpto are represented by one or two people. It is in that group of representatives where there are several women who know the situation very well. They go to meetings, empowered, raising their voice. They no longer have that

shame of speaking in front of men, on the contrary, they are always giving their opinion.

There are still things that only men do; for example, if they have to go into the sea to mark a natural seedbed with buoys, they don't tell me: "Hey, Paty, you as a secretary could do this." No, in that sense they are reluctant to consider women. It seems to me that this happens because we have to take care of the children, so it might be difficult to get there and go, but I could still go. I always find out late about these activities, but at some point I would dare to raise this issue. Little by little we have tried to see a way to get more women in more matters of the sea because, for example, here there are no women diving. That is why we are reviewing the construction of a sea urchin factory so that women can have their own place of employment.

In Caulín men work for pay and women contribute with minor jobs. Men control the economic field, and that is a type of machismo. They realize that, and they are getting used to the fact that the woman also works on other things, not just on small jobs. So, we are all trying to ensure that the woman has her space, but to continue advancing in her priorities they just have to go all out. If one remains silent, the thing doesn't work. There are still several that remain distant, they are not so involved. They do not contribute much because when they come to the meetings they don't talk much, it is difficult for them to express their ideas.

Furthermore, the age difference is noticeable. I am 38 years old and I am the youngest of the team. The rest of the women are between 50 and 60 years and up. So, I come from a generation with less taboo, less fear. If I feel or think something, I won't have a problem saying it in front of the assembly. But maybe a 50 or 60-year old woman is going to feel ashamed or afraid to say what she thinks.

Young people have become interested in the Ecmpto, but in general few are involved. We hope that this will improve, because their vision is fundamental for us. They can make a great contribution for others to learn technology, and to get the knowledge from the adults. Is very important to continue advancing with the Ecmpto and safeguard the wealth we have.



Patricia Avendaño

Caulín Bajo Indigenous community,
Chiloé, Los Lagos Region.

ŌKĒ MAPU



Ingrid White Llancapani

Admapu Ka Lafquen Indigenous community, Pichicolo, Los Lagos Region.

Mapuche Huilliche people

Illustration: María José Arce

My name is Ingrid. On my father's side my last name is White, and on my mother's side Llancapani. I come from the Llanchid Island, in the Los Lagos Region. There is my community called Admapu Ka Lafquen. 9 years ago I came with my family to live in a territory in Pichicolo, which is privately owned by a salmon company called Ventisquero. We are here with my two children, my partner and my animals since we won several lawsuits regarding the traditional and cultural use of this land.

The marine area that corresponds to our community is composed mainly of seaweed, fish, crustaceans, mollusks, etc. But it is also composed of the *ngen*, protective forces which inhabit these areas and are present from the oral stories that our ancestors have told us; For example, Millalobo, Chompalhue or Pincoya. Since I was a child I have heard that they inhabit these places and that they are in constant movement between land and sea.

Since I was little I always saw that this coastal area was an area for transportation. It was used to go to the doctor, to buy something that could not be produced in the territory, to visit family, but it has also been the first support of community life. We settled here for the products that can be obtained from the sea, that is the main reason. And, of course, the spiritual relationship. Here we have a cemetery that for a long time became a symbolism of *che's* journey, of the person, of our loved ones, to reach *ka mapu*, to another land and transcend after dying.

This area also consists of anthropogenic intervention, due to artificial crops of mussels and salmon. Today, one of our main

objectives is to protect those areas that are free of interventions. This helps us in all aspects: spiritually, it helps us protect and preserve our *ngén*; economically, to maintain balances within ecosystems, and allow the repopulation of species, their reproduction and permanence in these places; and regarding our community, that the *che*, the children, the adults, the grandparents, the grandmothers, young men, young women, can move within this area, relate to it and revitalize our culture.

We women are the basis of this model of life. We are the basis of human reproduction and economic sustenance: if our companion goes to the sea and brings back fish or seafood, generally women are in charge of following the process of that food, whether cooking it or dehydrating it. Women also have a leadership role that is vital, because the vision we have has a lot to do with the protection of our environment and our families. Therefore, when we see the sea as a source of life, we plan that way, from a source that must continue protecting and caring.

In Admapu Ka Lafquen I have actively collaborated in different ways, such as participating in the board for 10 years. This has been a tremendous effort because we have had to work with people, with other organizations. And especially we have all promoted the rescue of our culture so that the community can know what it is about to be part of an Indigenous community, being part of this organization. I worked with boys and girls from different schools in the area and also I connected with other people in the community. My role within this territory is also linked to education, supporting the intercultural process and searching for that *kimun*, that forgotten knowledge. Our local traditional practices are being lost, they are remaining only in the wisdom of the elderly women who are passing away.

Since we joined the Mañihueco-Huinay Ecmpto application process, when we found out that we could apply, we were an active

part because we sought information, we were interviewed and they interviewed us. I feel that there is great progress—although maybe not so much lately. I know that one of the things that must be proven are customary uses, that is the ancestral uses that were given to the sea. However, it is a bit complex to validate it because this *kimun* was transferred orally and not in writing. For example, for the Artisanal Fisheries Registry (RPA) we did a lot of work: we had to investigate historical data, photographs, everything that involves Indigenous people from the *lafken mapu*, that is, from the sea.

These activities and knowledge that we carry out, whether paid or not, must be promoted with the Ecmpto. There are practices, like the smoking of seafood, where it is the women who collect the razor clams, the Chilean mussels, the mussels; they catch them, they cook them, peel them, skewer them, smoke them and that way they provide food when it is needed. Other less visible practice has to do with the search for medicine. There are many algae and animals inside the *lafken* that help restore *küme felen*, well-being, or *küme mongen*, the good life. And in the case of those that are paid, you could mention the same collection system from the shore, but which is sold at fairs or exchanged. I believe that the Ecmpto will contribute to maintaining that sovereignty, that access to food.

Until now, the roles that make decisions regarding the Ecmpto in general are carried out by men, and the fact that there have been women leaders position us to say: “Here we are present and we have a voice, a thought, a way of relating.” I can observe that within the Ecmpto applicant communities, the vast majority of their representatives are women. That is valuable, it means that the woman nowadays is more worried about what happens with her surroundings, with nature, in the sea and on land. Along these lines, one of the expectations generated by the Ecmpto is the hope, making the *lafken mapu* visible as a unique

territory that must be respected, protected, cared for, restored. We have to navigate towards those horizons of regeneration, restitution. I do not believe that all people are guilty of generating climate change, but there is an extractivist capitalist model that is accelerating it. If we continue to promote this Western thinking, it will probably be very difficult to stop it. But those things are not in our hands, like what happened with the bloom of algae that came from somewhere else and that due to climate change proliferated and caused the death of fish.

There is a lot to rescue and think about how we are going to adapt from our *huilliche raquizuam*, our thinking. You have to see how our people organized themselves through *trawün*, of the *nütram*, of the *koyagtun*, those who can last days, weeks. Returning to those practices is important, give yourself time again to reach an agreement. Education is a good tool for this, because young people are a generation that needs to be strengthened. Just like the adults, just like the children.



Ingrid White Llancapani

Admapu Ka Lafquen Indigenous community,
Pichicolo, Los Lagos Region.



Rocío Colivoro Llancalahuén

Mon Fen Indigenous community, Yaldad, Los Lagos Region.

Mapuche Huilliche people

Illustration: Elena Díaz Leiva

Mari mari kom pu che, my name is Rocío Colivoro Llancalahuén. I am 21 years old and I belong to the Mon Fen community of Yaldad, Los Lagos Region. I am proud to be originally from Yaldad, to have grown up here and honestly I would never go to live anywhere else. Here many people are related to the sea, they have their marine crops. We fish a lot of shellfish; we go fishing only for our consumption and we go to the sea to make guillatu, a spiritual ceremony.

I was studying from eighth grade to my last year of high school in Chonchi and then I started doing my electrical technician professional internship in Quellón. When I rented and worked in the city of Quellón I started to feel bad, the same happened to me when I was studying in Chonchi: tachycardia, nightmares, I heard voices, I had visions, and this was increasing. The only place that calmed me was the lafken, immersed in the sea or just sitting on the shore.

Then there was a trip from my community to a spiritual ceremony where a machi and I took advantage of making pelón, which is when the machi sees your urine, and I found out that he had a küpalme, a püllí of lawentuchefe, who is the person in charge of Mapuche medicine. The machi explained to me all that, that he brought with me a spiritual charge, an ancestral inheritance of lawentuchefe, that my role would be to heal people through lawen, medicinal herbs, making pelón, that my püllí and my perimontun are of lafkén, of siren, that is why I felt the need to go and get in the water all the time.

I spoke with my family and we accepted this position, we chose the same machi that made me pelón to guide me in the process, we met with authorities from my community and talked about the role I was going to start. Everyone understood it, although they worried, because leading a spiritual charge is something very difficult, but they supported my decision to accept my role. Here in Chiloé you don't see that much. The initiatives are rather to fight to get something that gives us stability, only now the spiritual issue and spiritual charges are being raised. And so it was that I was presented as a spiritual authority in one of our winoy tripantu ceremonies (ceremony for the return of the sun or new cycle).

I went to Osorno to begin my anumko lawentuchefe process with the machi, which is to be a lawentuchefe apprentice (Mapuche health agent), I still haven't gotten the position. I started to feel bad, suffocated, and I discovered that I was pregnant, so I decided to return to Chiloé because in Osorno I was alone without my family. I couldn't see the urine because through what I saw I couldn't hurt my baby, nor could I make lawen because of the strong smell of the plants, and there was no sea or river nearby where you can go for a walk and do guillatu.

Now that my baby is almost six months old, I plan to start my anumko lawntuchefe process again in Osorno. As the spiritual authority of my people I have to be prepared and available.

Since my role here is more spiritual, I joined the process of the Ecmpto from that area several years ago. Many times we went out to have a trawün, a conversation with other territories, with other communities, but we started them with a guillatu or a llellipún, that is, different spiritual ceremonies. I remember that the first time I heard about the Ecmpto was from my community and there I was helping a coordinator.

Despite how little I have participated, I think it is a very good thing for us. If my community is linked to them, it is because something good is being done.

I emphasize from my community the fact that we have always been united, and that the decisions of both men and women, young people and old people have been respected. Nobody makes fun of the other. Other communities are amazed to see that, because in other places there is a lot of machismo, or there are only women participating, or men do this and women do that.

Like all people and all communities, we had ups and downs. There were times when we would separate and stop getting together for various reasons, but now we are coming back and stronger. The weches, the young people, continue there in everything. I couldn't count how many there are, but it shows the participation of new generations. It is important that the adults involve them, let them speak. I think that they should not be denied the possibility of giving their opinion, they should not be ignored. Many of them emigrate when they go out to study and do not return, it is something that is seen especially on the islands.

We as young people have to involve other young people, explain to them what this is all about. Because some are afraid to ask because they think they are going to be treated as being ignorant. When they ask me something, I clarify everything I can and extensively. So they could be motivated to continue learning, to continue getting involved with our culture.

I see myself joining my community for many more years. When I become lawentufe—because I am still an apprentice—, it's going to be something more familiar. The community will always be with me and I with her. And as for the lafken—because my püllü, spirit, it is from the lafken—, I will always be fighting so that we can do our guillatu (ceremony), calmly whenever

we want. Every time I need to get into the water, make sure it is clean. That one can get into the water without worrying that there is something that may affect or cause harm.



Rocío Colivoro Llancalahuén

Comunidad indígena Mon Fen,
Yaldad, Región de Los Lagos.



Pamela Zúñiga

Quinchao, Chiloé Province, Los Lagos Region.

Mapuche Huilliche people

Illustration: Elisa Monsalve

My name is Pamela Zúñiga Neún and I have been living in the rural sector of Quinchao for 33 years. I was born and raised in this archipelago. I have an adoptive family who raised me from the age of eight months and from whom I learned everything about who I am; and I have a biological family that comes from the island of Apiao, which is also within the Quinchao archipelago, in the Los Lagos Region. When my biological mother was pregnant with me, she decided to cross the sea and come to live on the island of Quinchao.

I have a lifelong connection with *lafken*, with the sea. Since I was a little girl I was always fishing for shellfish and when I got a bit older I worked with *pelillo*, with *luga*, together with my family. I had to learn to ride a horse because the places where we had our *pellilo*, we went on horses. And so it has been all life, the freedom of being on the beach.

My dad had a boat and when we were going to look for *luga* I liked to go ahead, getting my feet wet. I looked at the depth of the sea, that immensity overwhelmed me. My mom always said that you had to have respect for it, not fear. So we were three friends who grew up together and told us that we would not throw sticks or offend any sea animals. When we went into the water to splash around, to jump a lot, they said we were calling for bad weather.

This is very old territory. When the Spanish arrived to the Quinchao archipelago, it was already inhabited given that its climate made all life on the seashore very fertile. This place is very flat, three rivers converge and it is very suitable for agriculture.

There is a period between March and May when the beaches fill with *lamilla*, the Chilote seaweed.

In recent years the diversity of seafood and fish from the islands has been significantly reduced. This is due to extractivism, trawling and the salmon industry and its chemicals. If you talk to people who have many stories about the sea, from 30 years ago, they say that there was a grouper—a giant fish—fishing ground here. There were seahorses that measured up to half a meter. But now this modernization process has made us preoccupied with other things: the land, the house, the computer and we stopped seeing the sea, we no longer bond with it.

Here, in general, the man goes to fish and the woman goes out to fish for shellfish. But the role of *lawen*, of ancestral medicine, is more assumed by women. This territory of Quinchao has the particularity to have a large presence of women in charge of the heavy work. This is because in 1712 the order of the Spanish was to kill all men, children and the elderly, generating the formation of matriarchies. The men ended up ignoring parenting and the woman became a super woman who did everything. There are cases where women are clearly leaders. Some inherently, whether from the community, the church or the neighborhood association. Others because no one wanted to do it, and little by little they began training, studying and getting rid of the fear of speaking in public. There are also women who are no longer in office but who support other leaders from outside.

In recent years I have been working on the process of defense of the coastal areas and I have done it from the Indigenous communities. I have a position and its ancestral name would be *ñidol*, as a political agent who organizes the territory. I remember that everything started with Chilote May when some friends I met when I studied in Valparaíso came to my house and they told me that they were doing an Ecmpto in Rauco. At that moment

I thought: “This could be useful for Llingua, where people are dissatisfied with the salmon farms and are helpless because they do not catch the fish.”

Then I moved and they invited me to an activity they were doing in Melinka, ‘Marine Conservation Meeting’. I was unemployed, I had only five *lucas* (thousand Chilean pesos) in my pocket. I hitchhiked to Quellón and then they paid for our tickets to the meeting. There they told me about all the conservation structures and one of them was the Ecmpo, protected by the Lafkenche Law. And I felt that that was returning sovereignty to the people with something as important to us as the sea. It was wonderful.

It has been positive to return to the sea, to take care again, to believe that it is possible that as ordinary people we can do something to protect these places. There was a period of hopelessness where we thought we would not be able to do so, to defend our area against big and powerful companies. But now people realize that has changed, they have seen that they have the power in their hands.

However, one of the difficulties in this territory is that many of the women who are leaders are also mothers and housewives. So if there is a meeting in Chonchi, for the women of the islands means spending a day and a half outside her house. Since they are leaders in everything in the home, then who is going to feed the family, the animals?

That is why it is important that young people get involved and assume responsibilities, and be capable of taking leadership if necessary. Let them take charge of these causes. Besides, they know both languages: technical, legal, and ancient or ancestral knowledge. I see the interest and potential in them, the problem is that they are not consistent. We have talked about it several times, it is always the wake-up call that the leaders do in the *trawün*; they ask more young people to go, they echo that.



Pamela Zúñiga

Quinchao,
Chiloé Province, Los Lagos Region.





Ingrid Echeverría

Lafken Mapu Indigenous Community, Chiloé, Los Lagos Region.

Mapuche Huilliche people

Illustration: Juanita Canela

My name is Ingrid Echeverría Huequelef and I am *werken* from the Lafken Mapu Indigenous community, from La Barra from Chaiguao, in Quellón. I am mestizo. From the paternal side, we are Basque descendants, they came to settle in Valdivia at the time when there was a lot of work with wood. And on the maternal side, we are Huilliche Mapuche, from the Rio Bueno area, downward. For work reasons, my parents came to Chiloé and they raised me here, between Quellón and Puerto Gala, but I was born in Coyhaique, which is further south.

I have four children and one on the way. My partner is from San Juan de Chadmo, a territory with a lot of work in the sea, especially for men, while women are more preoccupied with the garden, plantations, animals and breeding. He also belongs to a community called Lafken Mapu, just like mine, but they are different territories. They are also at the beginning of their Ecmpto processing.

In the territory we inhabit there is a spirit, an *ngen*, as we call it on the island of Chiloé. That's why we have always done spiritual ceremonies here. Since I was a child I walked around these places with my dad; I have always had love for the sea, thanks to him, because he took me fishing when he worked. We went out in the boat to pull in longlines and then to collect them. These are nice experiences. I was in charge of scaring away the wolves with stones, because when the longline was hooked and full of hake and congrid eels, and a fish that was called 'catfish'—which I don't know if it still exists—would get up and the wolves were beginning to arrive and it was a terrible thing, because

when the fish was bitten by wolves it was no longer possible to sell it. So, we knew that crashing stones under water made their ears hurt. That was the technique to scare them away.

Upon reaching a further part of La Barra, where it is more populated, one knows that something happened there because one feels very strong. In our family we told each other that we had to approach with respect, offer something and have a simple ceremony and so on, little by little, be more protected. The *ngen* is more on the coast and towards the interior of the sea, that's why when there are good tides we have an abundance of algae. In fact, we are overwhelmed, there have even arrived boats from Quellón to work.

The spiritual theme is something that fills me with meaning. To know that we are not the only ones, that there is something else, greater than us, and protects our territory. And if we give it the respect and recognition it deserves, it will continue to protect the territory from everything that can attack us.

I always remember when as children we went to play on the beach and the waves did not let any horse mackerel get to the bottom. And since they were a good size, we took them out and ate them. That was the last horse mackerel I saw. My family has been working a lot on the collection of *luga* type seaweed, an activity that we have carried out since I was very young.

I think that my dad was a feminist at the time, because he made dough, he cooked and if my mother was busy with other housework, for example washing clothes, he made us lunch. He always told me that he should learn all the trades possible and was never ashamed to work.

My mom, on the other hand, has always been the one who runs things in the community. She deals with the paperwork, the pro-

jects, the requests. For my part, I deal with the medicinal issue, so to speak, if a remedy is missing for a neighbor.

The *ñañas* (women) trust me a lot, because they don't know how to treat some diseases with plants or algae. I can recognize them, and I know how to differentiate between shellfish and a pile of dry shells.

The women here are the ones who lead. When the community was formed, about ten years ago, they wanted to evict us because we worked seasonally and not all year round. I had read all the statutes and I said no to the authorities, because we develop a customary activity. My mother was the president of the community, but there were only men in the positions of secretary and treasurer. Now my ex-sister-in-law is in charge because, as we say, they need to make room for younger people.

Here people have their small houses on the seashore. In that area there are many communities that have been very important. In Puerto Gala, for example, I know people who are writing about its history and about the sacrifice of the fishing people—people who came to fish for hake, congrid eels, clams. So it was like an illegal settlement and it did not comply with the requirements requested by the State. Those who stayed had to put up a big fight to not be removed.

I also have contacts with the coastal community, that in those times they did not want to recognize them as an Indigenous community because urbanization reached them. But there has always been an organization with history, they have very old practices. They had to appeal and fight, and they finally succeeded.

The territory where our community is located belongs to the Navy, we do not have ownership title. Some time ago some dads formed a union to organize the system, but there were people

who entered who did not have this concept of work in the community, they were only interested in exploiting resources, take economic advantage. And in that context, more or less six years ago, the Navy wanted to eradicate all the people of the sector due to the issue of earthquakes. But they couldn't because we invoked our rights as Indigenous people, the Convention 169, and they had to respect us.

At that moment we found out about everything that was related with the Lafkenche Law. In fact, the first one who found out, in a training for the Consejo de Caciques (Council of Chiefs) years ago, was my mother. She began working on the Ecmpto request. We talked about it in the community and saw that it was a viable way to protect our area. We had to do a tremendous job with the fishing people, because the only community that had Ecmpto was Trincao, then Yaldad and then us. But we were still among the first.

It's been about five or six years since we filed the application. When CONADI visited us, I was in charge of showing the area, since due to the medicinal workshops that I make with the same *lamngen*, I know the area and the seashells better. I also had to do the job of explaining to the neighbors, which has worked out over the years. So far it seems to me that there are eleven or twelve unions with which we work in the Guafo and Hualaihué Ecmpto. I believe that all this was thanks to the work on the small scale, like little ants, that each one did in its closest areas and circles, which later expanded to fishing people. That was the good thing, that everyone understood each other and this trust was generated.

Until now the Ecmpto has been our fundamental tool to protect ourselves mainly from the salmon industry, because they have contaminated our territory as they wanted. So the Ecmpto has helped us so that the entire community gets involved in the protection of the area.



Ingrid Echeverría

Lafken Mapu Indigenous Community,
Chiloé, Los Lagos Region.



María Eduvina Leutún Marín

Amotuy Ruca Indigenous Community, Los Lagos Region.

Mapuche Huilliche people

Illustration: Catalina Mekis

All my life I have been fed and sustained by the sea. I was born on the island of Llancahué, in the Puerto Bonito area which is located in the Los Lagos Region. In my home we always live off artisanal fishing; when I was 13 or 14 years old I was already helping my dad with those longlines made of vegetable fiber. That was the greatest lesson he taught me. Now I am 60 years old and my body has been getting tired. But, as long as I can, I will continue in this fight, making a contribution to my Amotuy Ruca community.

About 20 years ago I moved to the Pichicolo area, which is also located in the commune of Hualaihué. Here I continue doing what I like most: working at sea, collecting shellfish and fish. The shores also have a lot of value, because on the beaches are the medicinal plants that we collect and use for ailments. Plus, when I go out I de-stress and I feel good, happy. The sea heals me.

We share this territory among all the neighbors, with all the actors who are at sea. I only have a small area, but finally all the fishing families use the entire coast of Hualaihué, Puerto Bonito and Fiordo Comau. In fact, our community is part of the Mañihueico-Huinay Ecmpto. We integrated from the beginning, when the first applications were processed.

I found out about this acronym about 12 years ago thanks to the Lafkenche Law. Since then the Ecmpto has been vital, especially for the value that it gives to everything that is the *lafken mapu*, the sea. I see it as an area to care, protect and share, and to

prevent outsiders from continuing to exploit our resources and respect us. However, I meet people from outside who come to do things that can no longer be done, because the maritime area is protected. So, the main risk that this law has is that it is the same people who sometimes do not take into account the requests. Some still don't understand them, and others are forgetting the requirements to apply. We feel a little adrift.

Here there are men fishers and women fishers, and we share the entire area equally. We participate in the *T*, which is the culture of conversation and decision-making. The job that we do comes from our own will. We learn it like this, teaching each other and transmitting that knowledge from generation to generation. A certificate is not necessary to prove our knowledge.

We are the ones who speak out the most. Before we were submissive, but not anymore. Most of us women are leaders of organizations, unions, neighborhood associations and Indigenous communities. There is a lot of courage in the role we play. For example, in the administration of the Ecmpto, I support and accompany the leaders of the Association of Indigenous Communities. Maybe sometimes I get exhausted and I would like us to receive a little recognition for our work as fishers and collectors. Working in the sea, harvesting shellfish, is the way that I obtain support for my house and this is not remunerated. Therefore, I would ask for more consideration towards us.

It is important to include more women in the Ecmpto, from the same community, from the unions, and bringing in people from outside who come to show us their experience. It would be essential, because one of the main problems in the territory is the lack of agreements and coordination. This way we could recover respect among ourselves, the values that have been lost over time.

On the other hand, the young people of Hualaihué should not remain on the sides. We must prepare them so that in the future they can take charge of the Ecmpto, which is a tremendous burden. We have to hold workshops for them, include them in dialogues. We must allow the other people who come after us to be part of this, because they come with new perspectives. Some *lamngen*, who continue fishing and collecting on the beach, are teaching the children about their work, which is a great contribution. They need to know how one grew and why we continue working this way. They are not ready yet to take charge of the Ecmpto, but I am positive that they are learning from us. Maybe now they do not have the strength, but we have to continue talking to them and explaining to them so that they continue our fight with the same wisdom.



María Eduvina Leutún Marín

Amotuy Ruca Indigenous Community,
Los Lagos Region.





Mirtha White Navarro

Lafken Mapuche Indigenous Community, Pichicolo, Los Lagos Region.

Mapuche Huilliche people

Illustration: Francisca Silva

My name is Mirtha White Navarro, I am 36 years old and I belong to the Lafken Mapuche Indigenous community of the Pichicolo sector, located in the territory of Walaywe (Hualaihué) in the Los Lagos Region. My roots are from here; my Huilliche ancestors have always been in these lands and we the new generations have remained working or grouped in community.

Our relationship with the sea has always been through shore fishing and shellfish. We go down to the beach regardless of how far away we are. We have always gone to collect shellfish and fertilizers for the gardens. My mother is Chilota and Huilliche born and bred; if she didn't eat fish or shellfish during the week, she said that she would have a headache. My dad comes from these mountain ranges, but his roots were linked to the sea. My partner, although he grew up in Lake Ranco, today also works at sea. And my daughters are the daughters of artisanal fishermen and are proud of that, because my dad was too. All my family have been fishers.

I come from families that have always been leaders, managers, and I have inherited that knowledge. Today I am president of this *lof*, which is located between the banks of the river and Cerro Pichicolo. My community is one of the first Indigenous communities established in the Walaywe territory and has a strong history of territorial claim. That's why I have to study, because my role is important and I have to live up to my responsibility, recognizing the tremendous work behind it and that needs to be valued.

When I took over the presidency of the community in 2019, I became fully involved in the processes of my community and with the request of the Mañihueico-Huinay Ecmpto to protect our territory. From the meetings in which I participated, I became more aware of how the territory in which I had lived had changed.

What clicked for me was thinking about our reality where we live here, in Pichicolo. Before there were fish farming companies that had recently, in 2010—if I’m not mistaken—withdraw. In 1995, if one went to Playa Larga—as we called it—you got everything, there was a lot of biodiversity. And in 2011 I went to the same beach to look for mussels, and I found sea snails. So I thought: “This cannot be repeated.” And the Ecmpto helped by saying: “Here we are, there is work to be done here to defend our beaches.” And so I joined the project, through direct participation, helping in the search for information and about all the processes we have to do to move this forward, how to establish the topic of customary uses. For example, it wouldn’t be nice to go do a rogation to the sea while it is full of ropes or piles of things that are not typical of the sea or our culture.

The care and protection of the sea is very relevant for us here in Pichicolo. Today, our occupation of these areas involves a cultural claim. Now the territory is more shared; it is not just us rising up as Indigenous people, there are also those who have often fulfilled social roles and have a greater connection with the sea. I am referring to the fishermen’s unions, the shore collectors, all those who participate in many activities outside the sector.

The claim is not only of those who work the sea in a more direct way but also of the *ñañas* that have been asserted themselves for a long time in ancient medicine. They also have a connection with the sea, because they even go to other places to get the herbs and ingredients that they previously took from these

shores for the preparation of their medicine. The sea is a supplier of many fertilizers for the orchards, such as the collection of the *pellilo*, which is used in the orchards that we have. These are brown and need a lot of salt, that's why we use those seaweeds.

The sea is an area where multiple activities are carried out, women being the ones who teach their children to know and recognize certain seafood and things like that. It is also a way to deliver ancestral knowledge which is linked to the sea. Return, for example, to the customs of our ancestors who used this area to develop their spiritual practices.

My expectation with all this is above all to protect the areas. That they are protected in a good way and that we, as Indigenous people, are able to raise our voices and have enough power to say: "Stop this because it affects us, because it destroys us."

One of the challenges within the Ecmpto is to strengthen the organization itself. Strengthening as a work team by recognizing the characteristics of each one, as long as the differences are respected. It is also necessary to have a single vision, a single line of work, and that is difficult because all people are different and have different ways of thinking.

In that sense, this process has united us and brought us very close as a community. Young people also contribute their opinion, how they see the Ecmpto, but they need to be involved more, so that they have more will to train themselves and educate themselves about the topic. They have to think that this at some point will remain in their hands.



Mirtha White Navarro

Lafken Mapuche Indigenous Community,
Pichicolo, Los Lagos Region.





Leticia Caro

Grupos Familiares Nómades del Mar Kawésqar Indigenous Community, Magallanes Region.

Kawésqar people

Illustration: Paula Alvares

My name is Leticia Caro, I am a paramedic and fisherwoman. I am 48 years old and currently represent the Grupos Familiares Nómades del Mar (Sea Nomadic Family Groups) Kawésqar community. Our community is part of the Asociación de Comunidades por la Defensa del Mar (Association of Communities for the Defense of the Sea).

The Kawésqar territory is essentially nomadic. Our ancestors traveled large and diverse areas. A part of our community travels in Tawókser, the area of Punta Arenas in the Brunswick Peninsula, which connects to the Seno Skyring. The other place we inhabit is the Almirante Montt gulf and the Mountains channel that is in the Kelael sector, which today is called Puerto Natales. The third area is located on the Steiner Peninsula, which is much further north than the rest of the territory and that we also travel widely. Nobody believes us, but we travel through all those areas: one day it may be a part of the community up at Steiner, and we move here in Skyring. There is a distance of 300 kilometers between one area and another.

What lies between our ancestral territory are cities that someone put in the middle. However, our routes are not interrupted, they continue. We don't move all together to travel through our territory, but each family moves on its own. This is because the structure of the Kawésqar people is family, not community. Still no one believes us. In fact, the legal regulations do not understand that we go through all those areas. For our community everything is united. If we separate it, the territory ceases to exist as such, and also its spirit. The same with the energies that coexist there.

For the Kawésqar the most important thing is our sea because it has ancestral relevance. Nomadism in this territory occurs precisely through the sea: in the past it was by canoes and nowadays by boats. It would be impossible to cross the *Kawésqar waes*—the Kawésqar territory—by road because it is an area where there are at least forty thousand islands. However, we also travel long stretches by walking, by bus or other ways because we are not going to lose that connection: the tradition of collecting reed, berries, seaweed, shellfish; shore fishing on foot; identifying nests, old campsites and lots of things we have to recover.

The bosses of our boats, whether men or women, have to know the territory very well. They know when to go out and when not, and the rest of the family must do what the boss says. In ancient times, my grandmother was the boss of the family boat. Now the boss is my dad, and in the future the boss may be my sister, or me. So there is a clear structure: this is the only place where we Kawésqar recognize a boss and we have to do everything he or she says right.

I remember that when salmon farming was sweeping our fishing places and treating the Kawésqar people very badly, I began to look for a formula to be able to counteract everything. As a community we were watching someone come take everything away and we couldn't do or say anything. So, searching and searching, I found the Lafkenche Law. At first I thought it was only for the Mapuche or Huilliche people, but I inquired and they told me that we could also use it. There we started campaigning with my dad and we started visiting the communities to make the first request.

We have several Ecmpto requests in much of our extensive ancestral territory. These are framed in three large areas distant from each other. The regulations question area and distance,

that is why it is important to understand the Kawésqar territory, to know the reason for the request and the reason for the distance between both Ecmpos and also to identify the three territorial areas within the same request.

We are with the Última Esperanza Ecmpto, an association of three Kawésqar communities. We also collaborate with the Muñoz Gamero Peninsula Ecmpto, where we filed a claim because only 9% of the requested area was recognized. That's what I mean when I say that the regulations do not include our nomadic territory. Furthermore, the fishing we do there is an extensive activity that requires large areas for nature to continue to reproduce. For us navigation is a ceremony and is also part of our health system; old people who are infirm go out sailing and come back as if they were 15 years old.

I am still leading the judicial, administrative, gathering requirements... I handle all of that. Now I have the help of the Atap community, but there are still administrative things that they don't understand well either. I think that by creating a good current situation, the rest comes on its own. We Kawésqar think like this, in the present. In fact, in our language there are five types of past; of the past that was once present. So how we see things in the future depends on what we are doing now. The road is slow but sure.

For us, the Ecmpto is like the vindication for what they have been taken away from us with the passing of time, because we almost disappeared from history. We are in the 'revitalization' process—although I actually don't like that word. We are recovering the Kawésqar fabric, but for that you have to mobilize several people, and that is also a difficult job, because people are far away and it is difficult to gather them together. Let us remember that after the impact of the genocide there were many people who denied being Kawésqar, and those people deep down

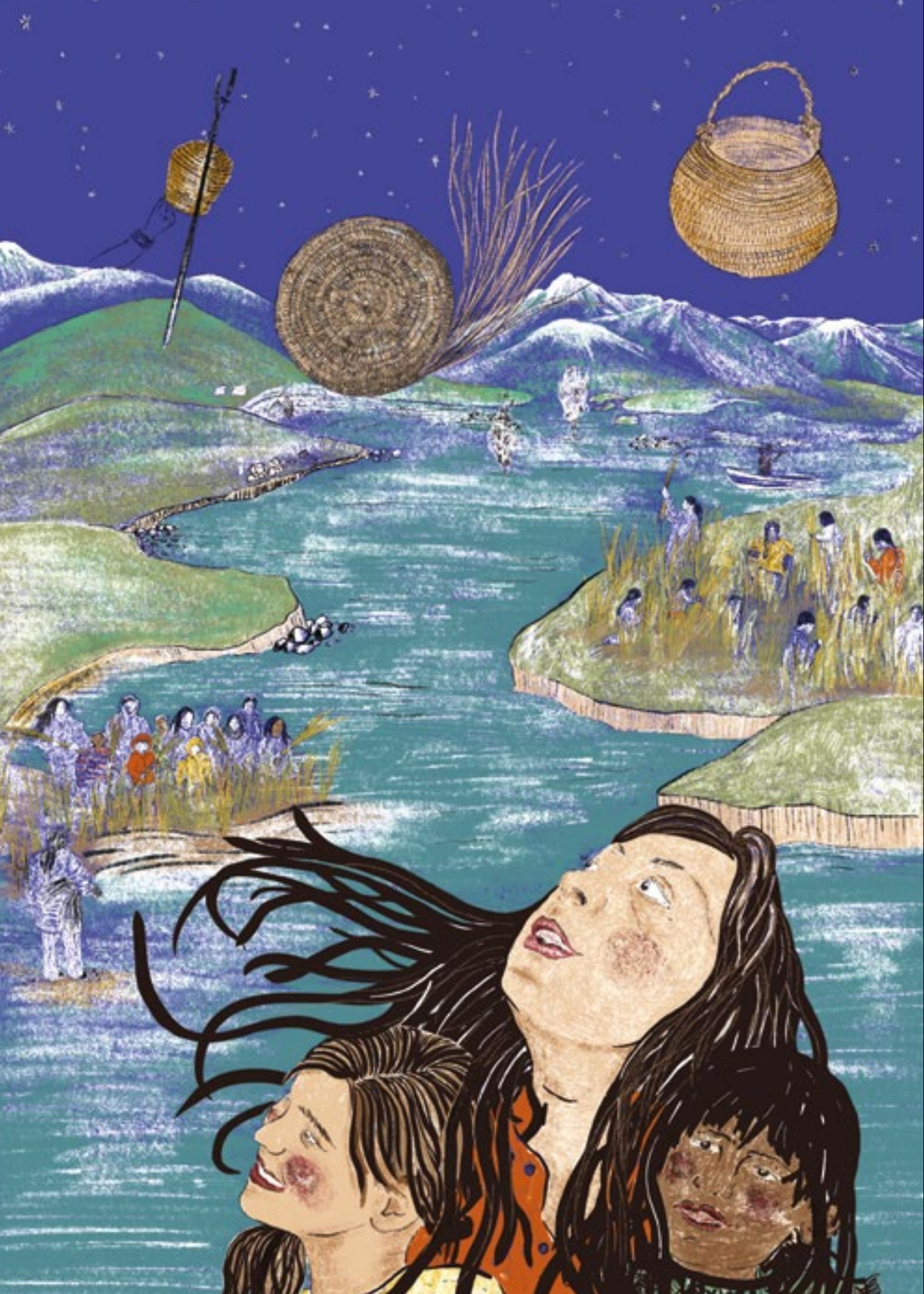
became Chileans. What we are doing today is transforming them into Kawésqar again. So, it's a double job.

From the oldest, the elders, we have transmitted the importance of the sea for the Kawésqar; it was the area that mobilized us in the past and that must continue to mobilize us. The sea is the energy, the greatest spirit that exists, and you cannot throw anything that does not belong to you. The sea is constantly warning us and telling us what is happening. In old stories it is said that if this is recurring, monsters will rise from the depths. In our case, women are in charge of transmitting that. There are many who no longer think about *Ayayema*, an evil spirit that makes the Kawésqar move, for subsistence, and that is why it is relevant to teach young people this recovery process. In that sense, they have come out to defend their areas when it has been necessary (they were the first to plead with their canvases and all). That's important, because we have to recover and be reborn on all fronts.



Leticia Caro

Grupos Familiares Nómades del Mar (Sea Nomadic Family Groups)
Kawésqar Indigenous Community,
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María Luisa Muñoz Manquemilla

Yagán Indigenous Community of Bahía Mejillones, Cape Horn. Magallanes Region and of Chilean Antarctica

Yagán people

Illustration: María José Carmona

My name is María Luisa Muñoz Manquemilla and I am from the commune of Cape Horn. I belong to the community of Bahía Mejillones and I am part of the Yagán territory. My story begins when I was born on this island, 40 years ago. I grew up with the oldest Williams families and I married a Yagán; I have four daughters and a granddaughter who are Yaganes. My husband has continued artisanal fishing, and we continue it with our daughters until today. We have that legacy alive, that bond has not been lost. Also we work in tourism, which has allowed us to continue traveling in our area.

Living between the mountains, the forest and the sea, and having a place in which there has been little intervention is very valuable, very significant. Being here in our houses and having these windows facing the sea, makes you contemplate the area you live in and wish it would never change. For us it is unique, a place that is easy to love. These connections are important because one also understands how people have lived in this territory throughout history. We are in a more modern time, but this area takes you back and makes you think about the time of the first inhabitants.

The history of the Yagán people has always impressed me—although at school the history which is taught does not discuss much and or it is about a people that is already extinct. It must be given a revaluation of the culture and the territory to understand the importance of each place, of each area. Get to know how the ancestors lived, how they fed, how they naviga-

ted, how they could carry out their ceremonies, their boats. I don't know, the little things.

The work of continuity and knowledge of the territory is led by women. I joined the fight supporting the community as a leader. Here at least once every year a project is made to cover the entire territory and the main participants are mothers with their children, the young people. Little by little we have been resuming certain activities to be able to return to the sea. We tour different parts of the Navarino Island and other islands in the area. Walk, collect bones of whales, look for reeds. It is also a sad, melancholic time, because many return to the places where they were born and where their relatives died.

It is the older women who lead the oral transmission of the Yagán language, because they are afraid of it being lost. Somehow there has been work done to preserve the culture, but we are in a critical moment and that is worrying.

In fact, we investigated how many people had a boat, and we realized that there are three families that have it, but only one can navigate due to nautical documents. This greatly reduces participation in sea activities. The artisanal fishing here is mainly of southern king crab and fake king crab. But, furthermore, with the presence of the red tide, it no longer brings anything out. So, it is difficult to understand how the Yagán people lived, how they fed from nature.

In 2017, we learned about the Lafkenche Law, but we saw it as something very distant, more fit to the side of the coast of Chiloé. So we disregarded it. But when salmon farms were installed in 2019, we realized that it was the only tool we had to protect our sea. So, the first thing we did was denounce, make public what was happening in this territory. We highlighted the poorly done process, without Indigenous consultation, which was very important.

When we managed to make the companies leave and lose the concessions, we made the first request for Ecmpto. The Greenpeace organization helped us with advisors to make the application. We worked with a good team to carry out information gathering and submitting a report with customary usage, maps and various other things. A little later we learned that the request was inadmissible. We presented it again last year, we did the report again and all observations were included. We were very persistent, every month we asked about the procedure. But of course there was no response, we presented an administrative silence that gave the organization a deadline to respond to us. And the last day, during the last hours, we received a response from Subpesca with a resolution where they once again declared the inadmissibility of the Ecmpto.

In the resolution they questioned the low number of people who are in the community. We are 72 members in the community. We deliver an Ecmpto management plan and we are very clear that the community will not be able to carry out that management plan alone. Therefore, other organizations have to get involved, like people involved in tourism or artisanal fishing. We are going to have to work with the fishing guilds, and not just those of Williams, but also those of Puerto Toro, because in the end it is quite a large area.

What is upsetting is that they denied us the opportunity to demonstrate that people are still present. And even more so since the reduction, without the State understanding the history of the Yagán people, an almost extinct people. We do not decide to be few people. Not understanding what happened, denying it, is to continue making ourselves invisible.

People are tired, but I think young people are getting involved, they are understanding. We are working on various basket

weaving and canoe workshops, and there are children and young people who participate in them. In the end, we are leading these processes, fighting for things, and they must continue to defend their own rights. Today young people are proud to be Yaganes and do not feel discriminated against as it happened before; They have been empowered. I'm talking about young people between 17 and 20 years old, but also of a new generation that is around 13, and of others under 10. There is a whole scale. The little ones are the most participatory, the ones who walk everywhere in the meetings even if it is just to eat, but they are there.



María Luisa Muñoz Manquemilla

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Region of Magallanes and Chilean Antarctica.

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Testimonials

Patricia Avendaño Testimony. Interview October 27, 2021.

Leticia Caro Testimony. Interview October 19, 2021.

Rocío Colivoro Testimony. Interview October 29, 2021.

Pérsida Cheuquenao Testimony. Interview October 31, 2021.

Ingrid Echevarría Testimony. Interview October 29, 2021.

María Luisa Muñoz Testimony. Interview November 19, 2021.

Ingrid White Testimony. Interview October 20, 2021.

Mirtha White Testimony. Interview October 26, 2021.

Pamela Zúniga Testimony. Interview October 28, 2021.

Eduvina Leutún Testimony. Interview October 20, 2021.

Colofón

The general coordination of this book was in charge of Lorena Arce, Karina Vargas and Yohana Coñuecar. The art direction was at the helm of María José Arce. The design and layout was done by Dominga Rodríguez. The translation of the English version was in charge of Teodora Hasegan and Daniela Campos Rubio. The technical specifications of the book are as follows:

closed book size: 17.5 x 24.5 cm. White bond paper of 106 gsm was used for the interior and white duplex cardboard of 370 gsm was used for the cover. The finishing was made with matte poly thermal lamination and the binding was thread-stitched and hot-melt. Part I of the book was printed in 2/2 colors, Pantone: Cerulean Crayola, and Part 2 in 4/4 colors, Pantone: Bright Orange Crayola. The texts were composed with the Serif font families, Bodoni Book for general text and interviews, and Sans Serif, Area for titles, introduction, final thoughts, acknowledgements and references.

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“Women of the Sea: Approaches to the Marine and Coastal Areas of Indigenous Peoples” is a book that emerges from dialogues and reflections between women of the sea. A work of collective, personal and deeply political construction based on the testimonies of ten Mapuche, Kawésgar and Yagán women: Pérsida Cheuquenao, Patricia Avendaño, Ingrid White Llanapani, Rocío Colivoro, Pamela Zúñiga, Ingrid Echeverría, Eduvina Leutún, Mirtha White, María Luisa Muñoz and Leticia Caro.

They are the ones who talk to us and share their views and perspectives on different topics related to the sea. Focusing their reflections on the Marine and Coastal Areas of Indigenous Peoples—a concept created from the Law of the same name and a process in which Indigenous women have had a fundamental role both in the drafting of the law and the application process for processing the Ecmpto. Thus, they share with us the importance that these areas have for them, the various roles and customary uses that they exercise there, their main contributions and the difficulties and gaps that they face in their daily lives for being women and belonging to Indigenous peoples. They also reflect on the continuity in the protection and defense of the sea, the generational transfer of their struggles and knowledge processes and conclude with recommendations to the State and other actors.

