Welcome to ORIKA town. We are autonomous people that work for the sustainability of the territory We invite you to know it and take care of it!
If you bring it, you take it with you!
#zerogarbage

Afro-community environmental governance in Islas del Rosario, Cartagena: an ethnographic approach using V&S theory
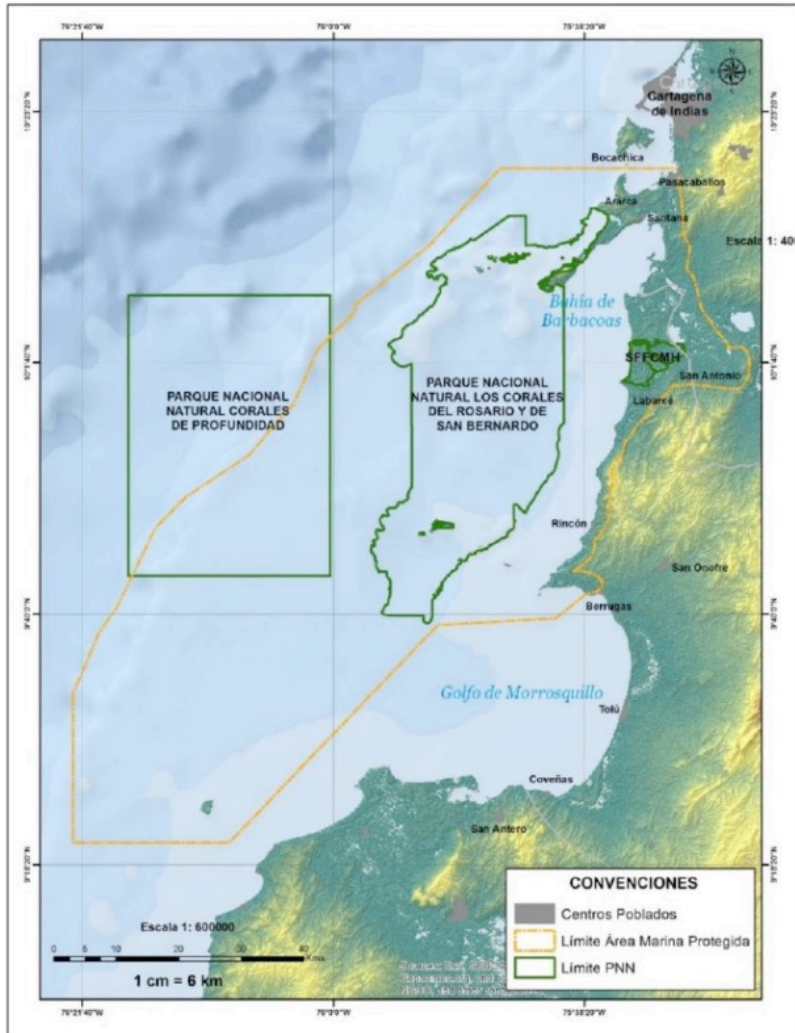
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Context

Context

¿Es nuestra Isla para dos?

Conflicto por el desarrollo y la conservación en Islas del Rosario, Cartagena

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Uniandes - Ceso
Departamento de Antropología

Colección PROMETEO

Gobernanza en los Parques Nacionales Naturales colombianos:
reflexiones a partir del caso de la comunidad Orika y su participación en la conservación del Parque Nacional Natural Corales del Rosario y San Bernardo*

POR CARLOS ANDRÉS DURÁN**

RESUMEN
Las políticas ambientales en los Parques Nacionales Naturales colombianos suelen generar conflictos locales y resultados contradictorios. Este artículo describe la historia y el desarrollo de estas políticas y critica sus efectos en el caso de las Islas del Rosario, un grupo de islas de la costa Caribe colombiana en las que el área marina fue declarada Parque Nacional Natural en 1977. El artículo se enfoca en los principales esfuerzos para la generación de un modelo de gobernanza para la conservación de los ecosistemas marinos, costeros y terrestres; y en los efectos de este modelo de manejo sobre la población isleña que habita en Orika, cuyos habitantes se reconocen como afrocolombianos. El artículo también analiza el empoderamiento político y ambiental de esta comunidad, cuando fue organizada a través de procesos de participación pública que tuvieron como resultado la conversión de la comunidad en un actor político y étnico que a su vez propone formas distintas de ejercer la gobernanza para el área protegida. Finalmente, el artículo discute sobre las dificultades que cualquier política ambiental enfrenta cuando el conocimiento científico se privilegia sobre la realidad, la cultura local y el conocimiento tradicional.

PALABRAS CLAVE
Gobernanza, Parques Nacionales Naturales en Colombia, Área Marina Protegida, Islas del Rosario, Comunidad afrodescendiente, participación.

Governance in Colombian National Parks:
Reflections on the Case of the Orika Community and its Participation in Environmental Conservation in Parque Nacional Natural Corales del Rosario y San Bernardo.

ABSTRACT
Environmental policies in Colombia's national parks tend to generate local conflicts and contradictory outcomes. This article describes the history and development of these policies, and criticizes their effects, in the case of the Islas del Rosario, a group of islands off of Colombia's Caribbean coast whose surrounding marine area was declared a national park in 1977. The article focuses on the main efforts to generate environmental governance over the marine, coastal, and terrestrial ecosystems and the effects of this management model on the Afro-Colombian community that inhabits Orika. It also analyses the political and environmental empowerment of this community, following its organization as part of participatory processes, and how it ended up becoming a political and ethnic actor that proposed a different model of governance in the protected area. Finally, the article discusses the difficulties that environmental policy faces when scientific knowledge is privileged over reality, local culture, and traditional knowledge.

KEY WORDS:
Governance, National Parks in Colombia, Marine Protected Areas, Islas del Rosario, Afro-Colombian Community, Participation.

Context

Objectives

Characterize the environmental self-governance of the Orika Community Council through the application of the Viability and Sustainability approach (based on the theory of organizational cybernetics).

i)   Identify the recursive levels of the OCC as a complex organizational system.

ii) Characterize the Viable Systems and the most relevant issues of the OCC in its environmental self-governance.

iii) Formulate participative social innovation (SI) proposals at the organizational level for the sustainability and self-governance of the OCC

Methodology to support self-transformation
(V&S Approach)

i) Organizational identity

ii) Recursion analysis

iii) VSM Analysis

iv) Strategy vs. structure,

v) Agreements and implement changes

vi) Monitor performance

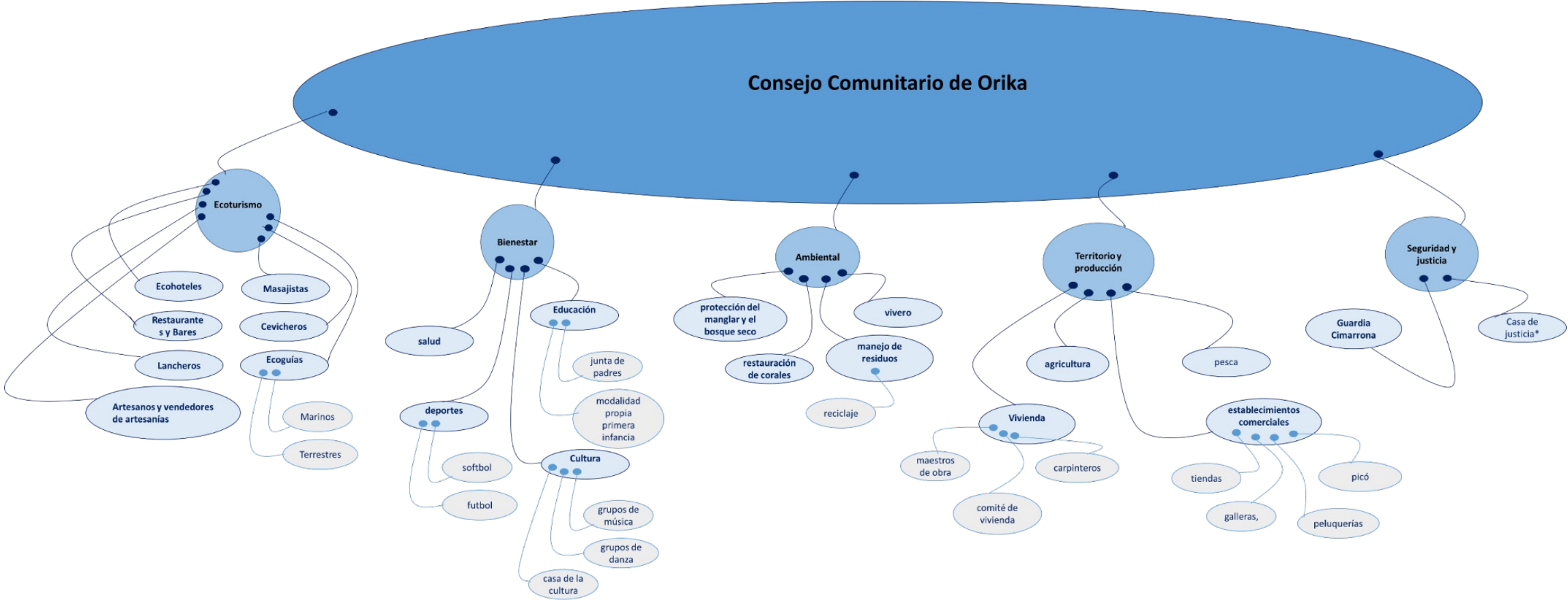(Espinosa & Walker, 2017)

Fieldwork:
Ethnography + 2 focus groups + 6 in-depth interviews
(oct 2018-dec 2019)

Organizational identity

"The Orika Community is an ethnic territorial community that exercises its own government and watches over the wellbeing of the native inhabitants and the care of our territory" (Focus Group 1, 2018)

Recursion Analysis (community sectors)

MSV: Operating Systems

1a Ecotourism:

i) ecohotels
ii) restaurants and bars
iii) boatmen
iv) ecoguides (terrestrial and marine)
v) artisans - handicraft vendors
vi) masseurs
vii) cevicheros

1b Well-being:

i) health
ii) education (parent-teacher association and own early childhood modality)
iii) sports (softball and soccer)
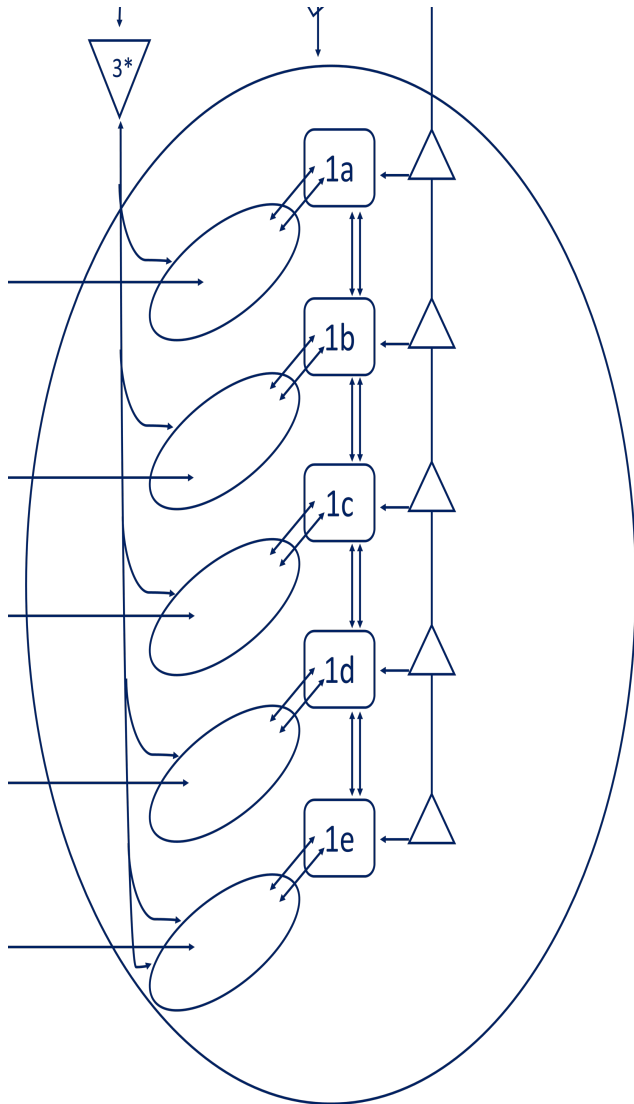(iv) culture (music and dance groups, and house of culture)

1c Environment:

i) waste management (recycling);
ii) nursery
iii) coral restoration
iv) mangrove and dry forest protection

1d Territory and Production

i) fishing
ii) agriculture
(iii) housing (master builders, carpenters and housing committee)
(iv) commercial establishments (stores, picó, hen houses, hairdressing salons).

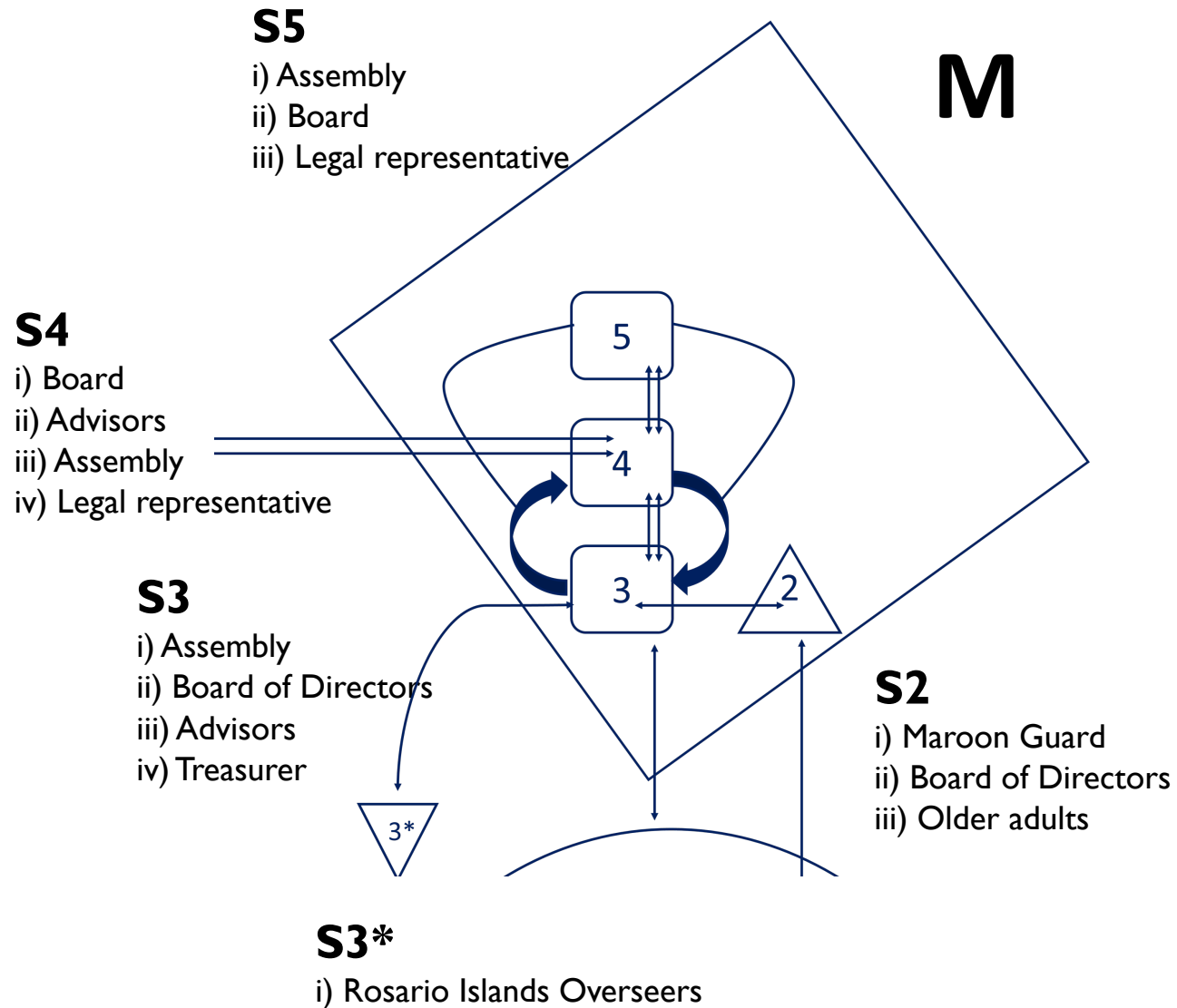## 1e Security and justice

i) Maroon Guard
ii) Courthouse (in process)

MSV: Meta system

M

S5
i) Assembly
ii) Board
iii) Legal representative

S4
i) Board
ii) Advisors
iii) Assembly
iv) Legal representative

S3
i) Assembly
ii) Board of Directors
iii) Advisors
iv) Treasurer

S2
i) Maroon Guard
ii) Board of Directors
iii) Older adults

S3*
i) Rosario Islands Overseers

MSV: Ecosystem
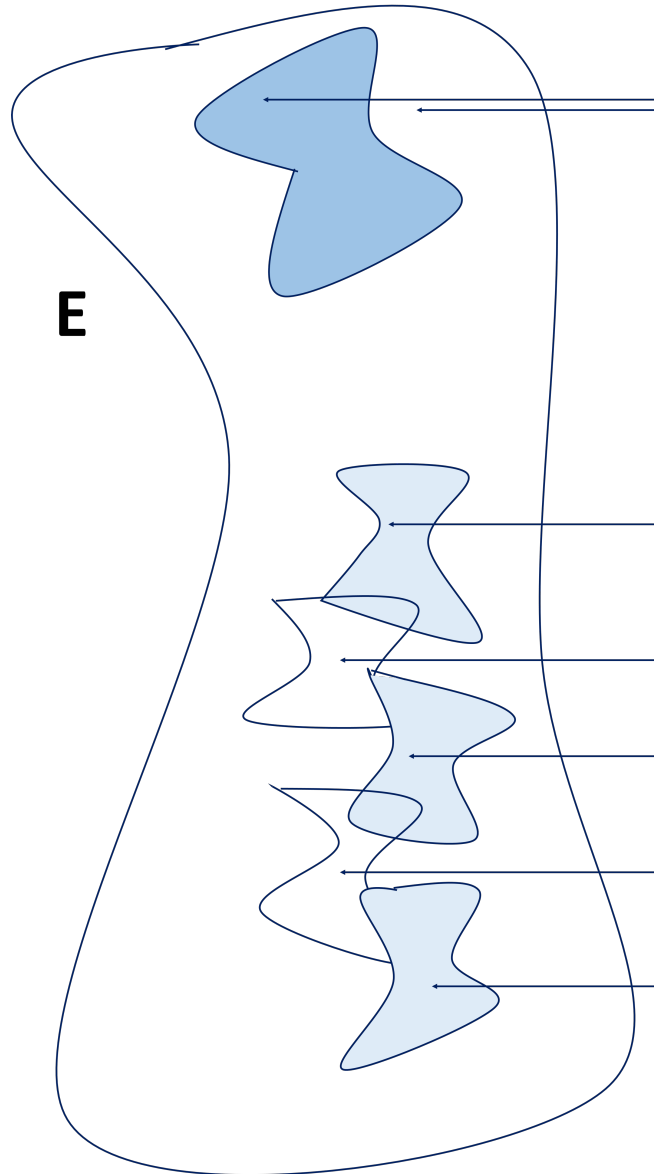
| Scope	Level	Actor
Public	Local	Community councils of the Cartagena island area
		PNNCRSB
		Mayor's Office of Cartagena
		Port Captaincy
		Cardique
	National	Special Unit of the National Natural Parks System (UAESPNN)
		National Land Agency (ANT)
		National Police
		National Navy
		Dimar
	International	FAO
		IOM
		Conservation International
Private	Local	Tourism companies
		Renters of recreational homes
		Universities
		CEINER
		Rosario Islands Foundation
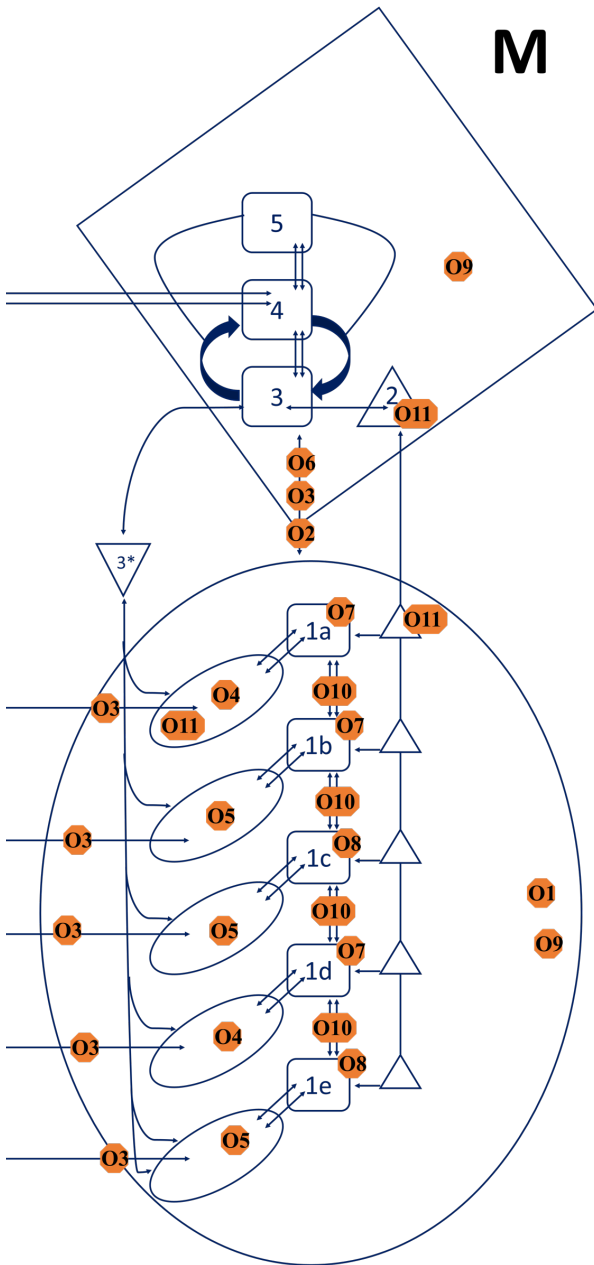
VSM Diagnostics: Operations

- **O1 -** S1 **emerged autonomously** and are **self-organized** as support teams or networks.

- **O2 -** S1 have **clear objectives**, set out in the Life Plan document.

- **O3 -** S1 are fully **autonomous to relate** to their respective environment.

- **O4 -** S1a and S1d involve formal business and individuals, they share **common economic activities and interests**.

- **O5 –** S1b, S1c and S1e are created by collective initiatives in the Life Plan but have **no leadership or legal structure**

- **O6 -** S1 **do not report** to the meta-system, but they are not asked for information either.

- **O7 –** S1a, S1b and S1d are **independent in decision making** and manage their own Budget.

- **O8 –** S1 c and S1e are **totally dependent** of the directive board.

- **O9 -** People perform **multiple activities** in both the operating system and the meta-system.

- **O10 -** Communication between the S1s is **informal** and articulation only occurs in situations that affect the entire community.

- **O11 -** Ecotourism (S1a) is an expanding operating unit.

MSV Diagnosis: Monitoring and Control
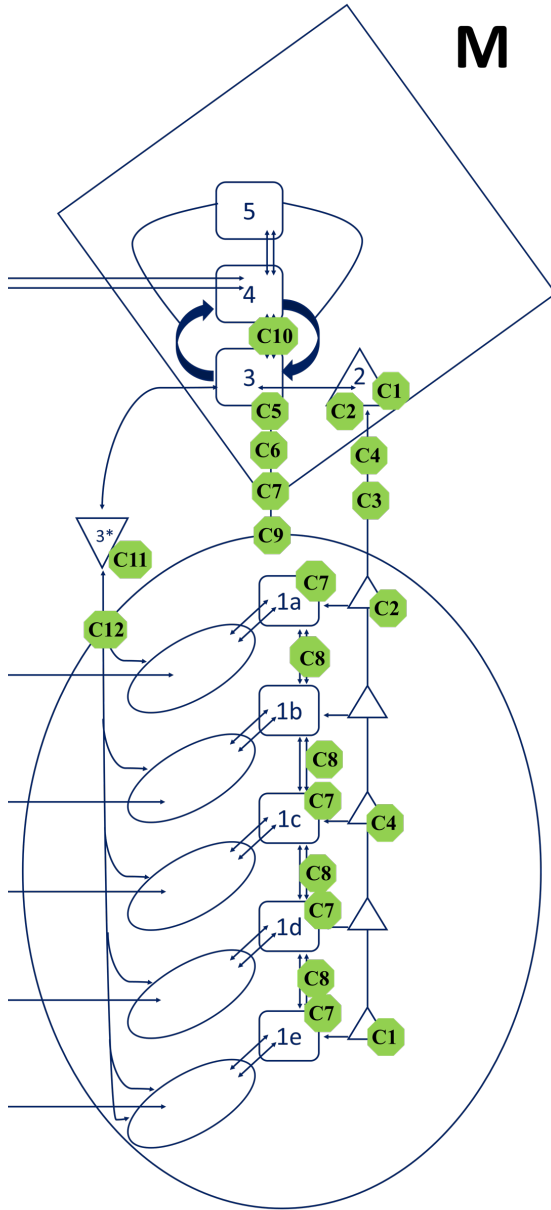
C1- S2 resolves conflicts informally through the seniors, the legal representative and the Board of Directors.

C2 - S2 does not have all the tools to autonomously solve the S1 performance.

C3 - S2 is **weak** as S1 is considered to be ignoring the board and the Maroon Guard is not fully in exercise.

C4 - Zoning is an S2 mechanism to **control resource exploitation**.

C5 - S3 does not formally exist, does not have an adequate operating model and does not promote the reporting of information by S1.

C6 - S3 audits only the execution of projects under the responsibility of the CCO.

C7 - S3 does not supervise the operation and fulfillment of S1 goals.

C8 - S3 **does not promote synergies and cooperation** between S1 and S2.

C9 - S3 does not have rules for intervention when S1s have difficulties.

C10 - Not handling data from S1, S3 formulates **strategy by intuition** or according to S4's guidelines.

MSV Diagnosis: Adaptation to the Environment

A1 - S4 is a frequent activity by the management team, assembly, advisors and other leaders of S1 meta-systems.

A2 - S4 is part of the decision-making process. It is financed through the hiring of leaders and advisors to participate in projects.

A3 - S4 **scans the environment empirically**, but it is not an ongoing activity, nor systematic, nor based on data or studies.

A4 - S4 relies on the vision of the Life Plan to propose plans and projects

A5 - The OCC system modifies its design to adapt to the changing environment (E).

A6 - No balance between S3 and S4

A7 – Few exchange between S3 and S4 due to S3 weakness

A8 – S4 actively participates in planning activities such as the Life Plan or Project proposals
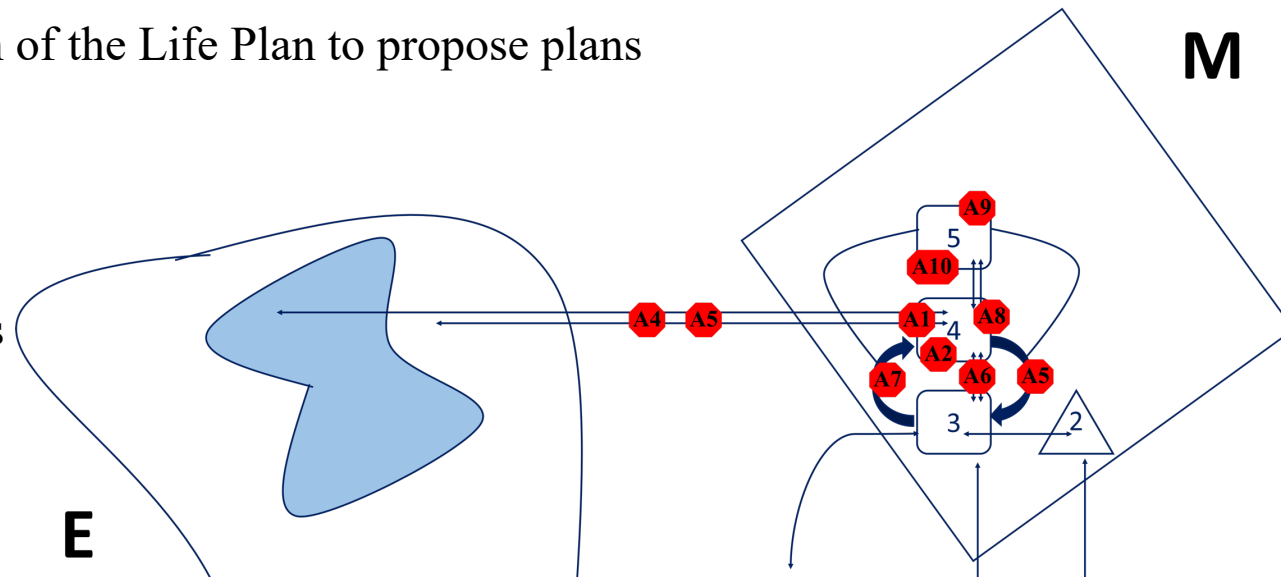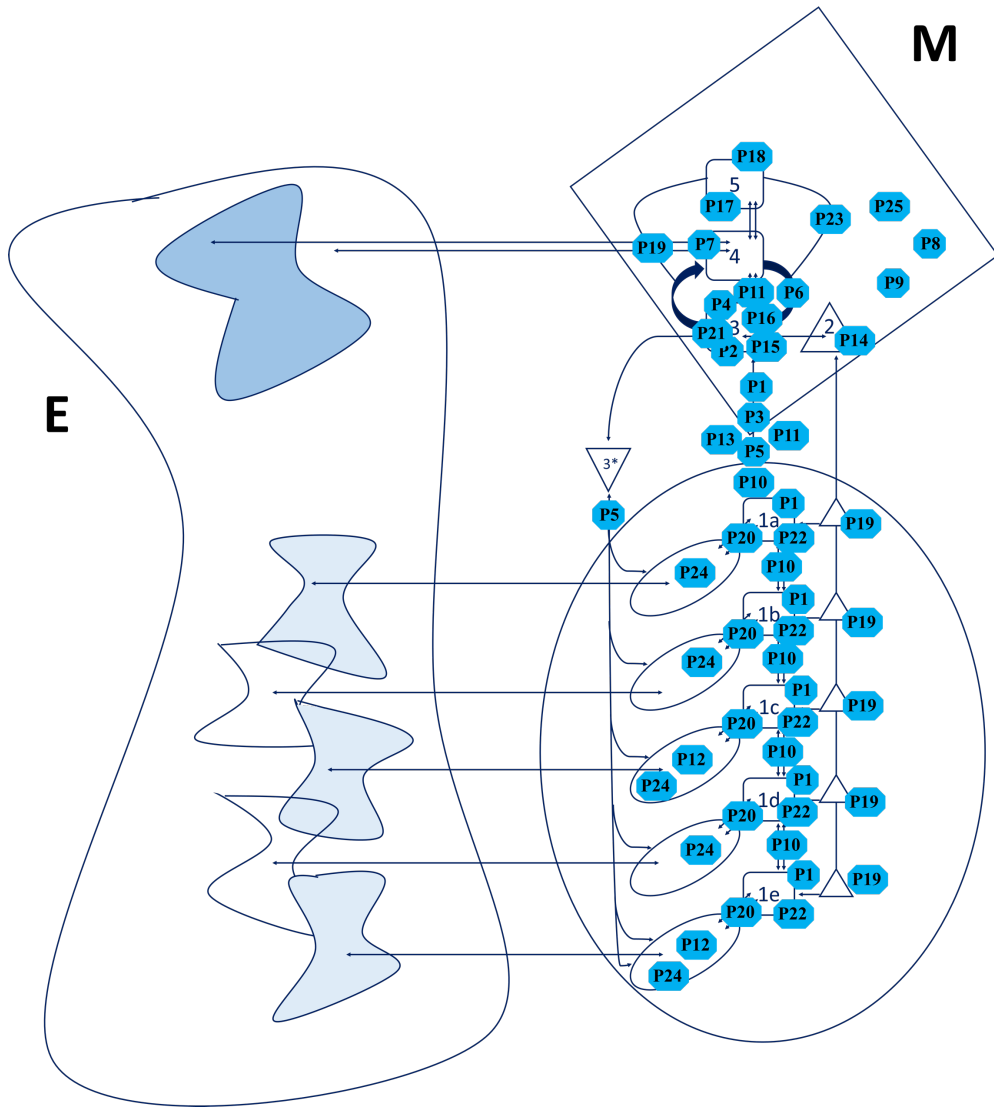
A9 - The OCC **Assembly is the highest authority** and is the appropriate environment for decision making, as it is the last instance for decision making

A10 - S5 is the assembly of the OCC and has a clear foundation in terms of ethnicity, knowledge and application of Law 70 of 1993.

Proposals: Coevolution with the environment

P1 - Mechanism for the annual prioritization of projects according to the Life Plan

P2 - S3 can prepare annual investment operating plans.

P3 - S1 to S3 information reporting mechanisms

P4 - S3 must prepare management reports and present them to the board.

P5 - Communication channels to report results
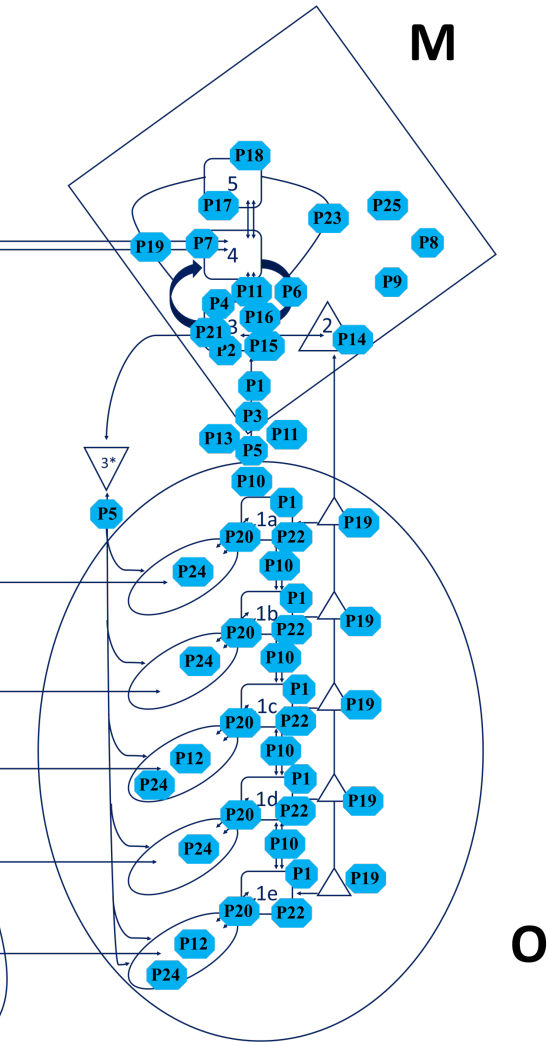
P6- Document adaptive responses and transmit them to S1

P7 - Context analysis team (S4)

P8 - Legitimate and efficient collective mechanisms for decision making

P9 – Communication methods to enhance decisión making at the assembly and operational systems

Proposals: Autonomy and Cohesion

P10 - Encourage responsible autonomy: accountability to S3 and generating synergies between S1

P11 Define roles in Project development and follow-up between S3 and S4 and a Project bank.

P12 – Strengthen financial and organizational sustainability in S1c and S1e for not depending from the directive board.

P13 - Define a representation of the operating units (S1) on the Board

P14 – Monitor and report the execution of the internal regulation and conflicto resolution activities

P15- Define an S3 role at the directive board

P16 – S3 can propose common initiatives and collective work between S1

P17- Amplify the knowledge management processes and the oral transmisión of learnings on adaptive experiences of the OCC
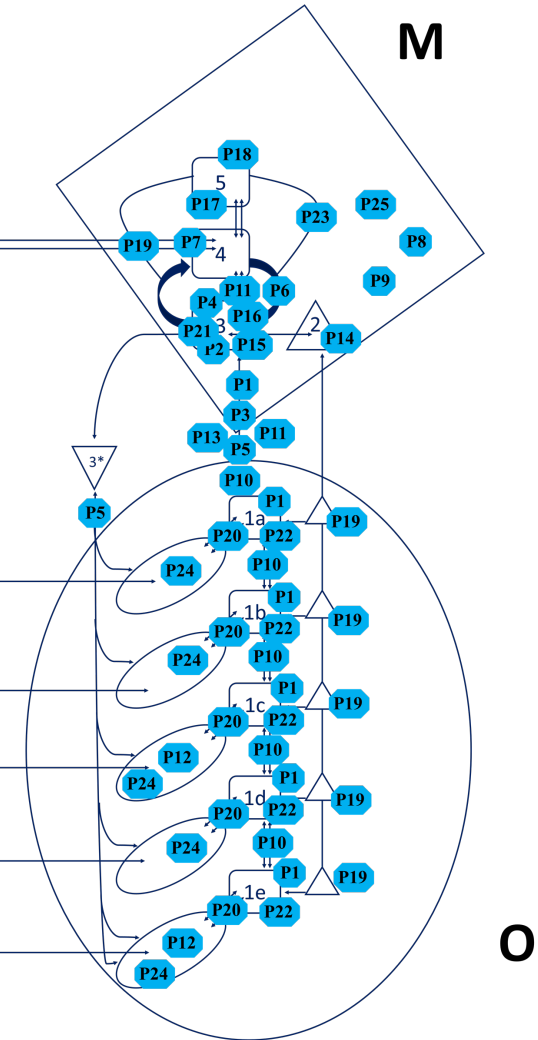
P18 – Include the history of the OCC as part of the ethnoeducation Project.

P19 – Develop instruments for environmental management of the OCC.

P20 - Guidelines or operational plans for each S1

P21 – Accountability reports of the execution of the operational plans presented to the Assembly

Proposals: Coevolution with the environment
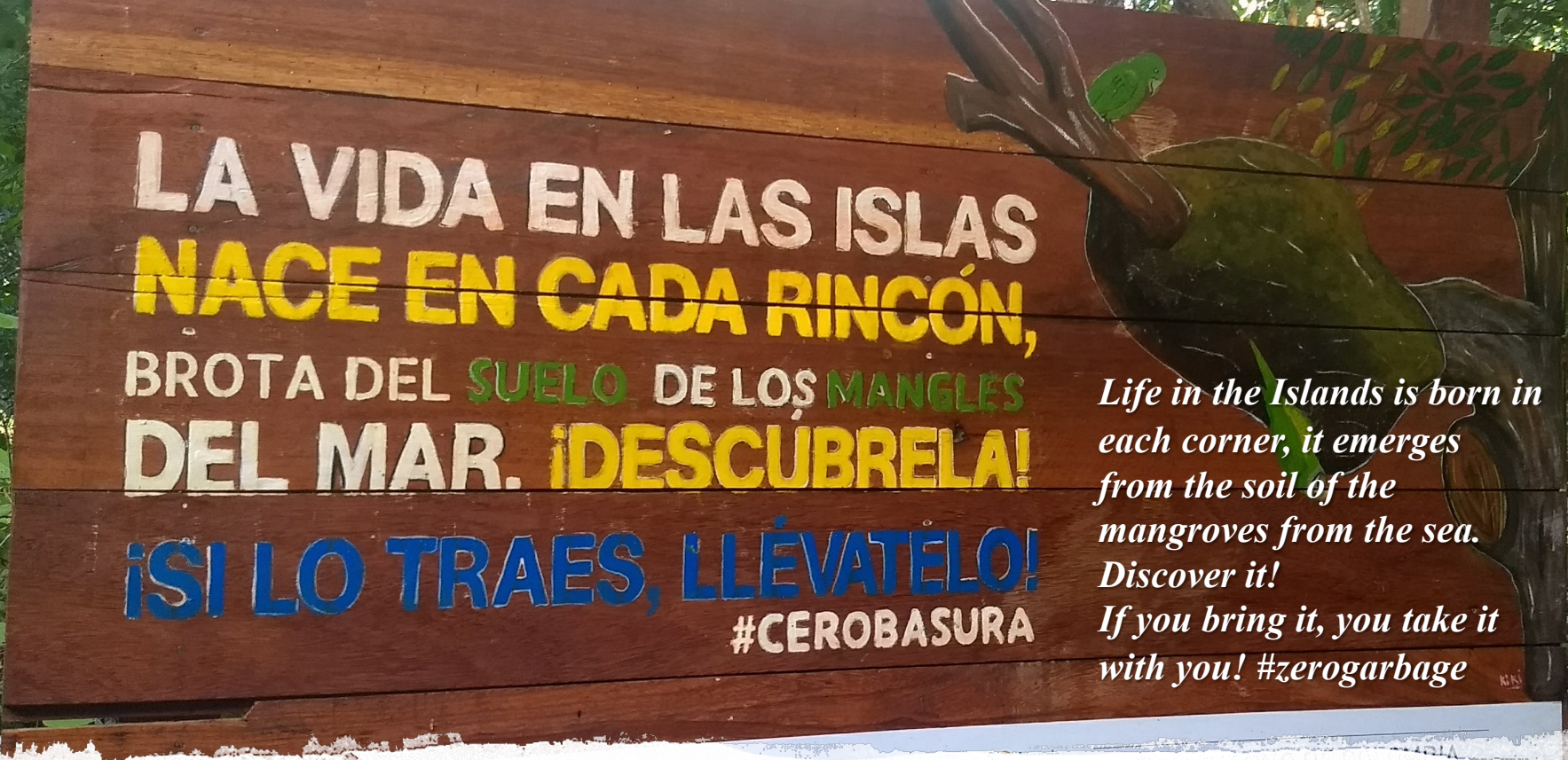

P22 – Strengthen S1 metasystems (M) to increase auto-management and reporting capacity .

P23 – Include S1 representatives in the Board to communicate needs and achievements

P24 – Develop projects to encourage financial autonomy and sustainability of the operative units (S1) with low budget.

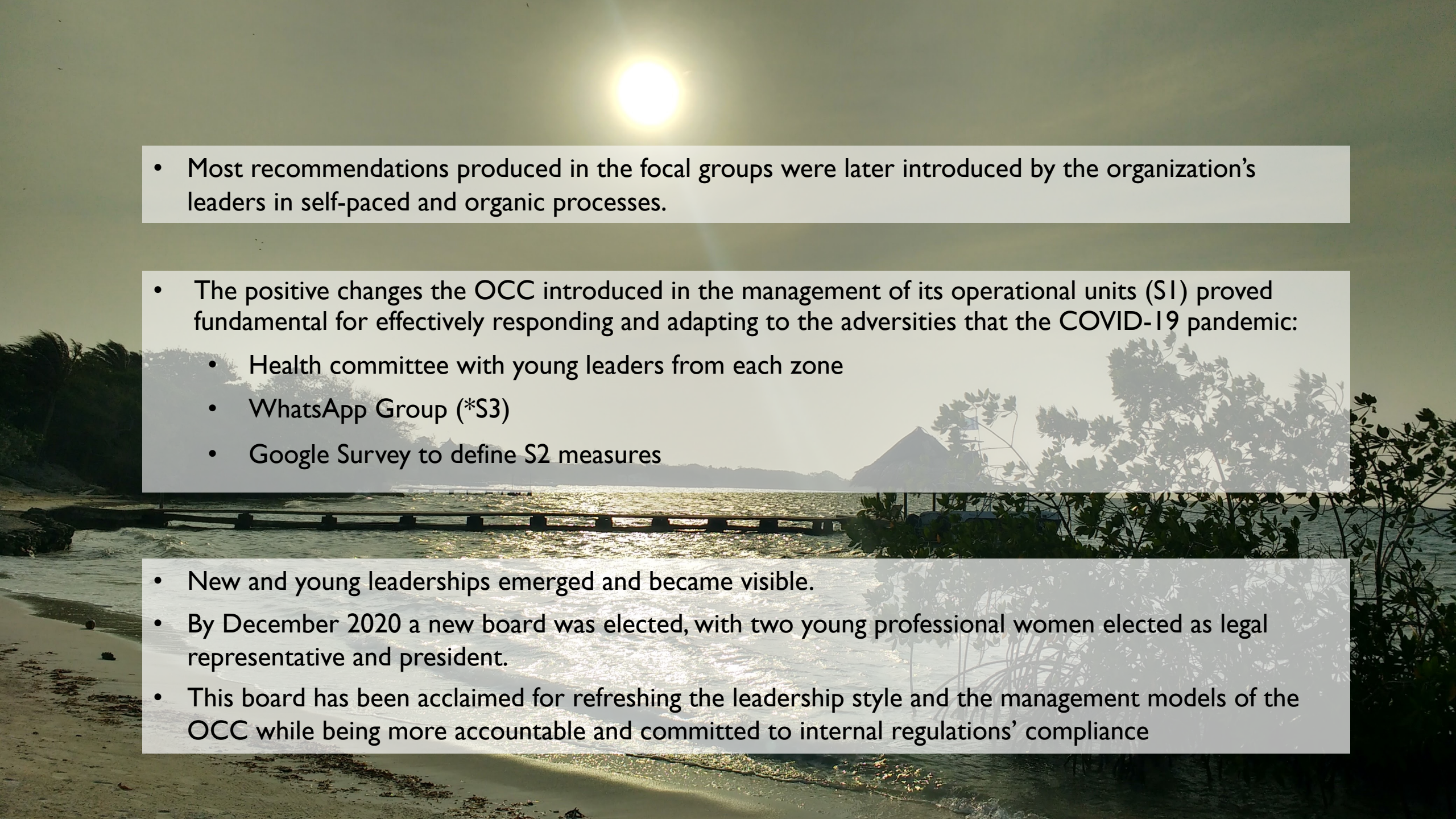**P25** – Identify financing means for economic sustainability of the OCC to cover positions and investment projects.

LA VIDA EN LAS ISLAS NACE EN CADA RINCÓN, BROTA DEL SUELO DE LOS MANGLES DEL MAR. ¡DESCÚBRELA!

¡SI LO TRAES, LLÉVATELO!
#CEROBASURA

Life in the Islands is born in each corner, it emerges from the soil of the mangroves from the sea. Discover it!
If you bring it, you take it with you! #zerogarbage

CONCLUSIONS & FOREWORD

- The use of the VSM metaphor on living systems and neurological networks helped the understanding as they also use several examples of human living system as learning tools.

- Throughout the v&s workshops, people fully engaged and creatively contributed to proposals for organisational innovation

- Depicting the recursive levels of the OCC allowed us to understand how this community has developed its different social and economic activities, in self-organised teams

- Participants resonated well with basic principles of 'responsible' autonomy - reflected in S1's autonomous behaviour

- Desire to remain cohesive around the OCC and to demonstrate ecological conscience in the development of its business and communal activities.

- The colonial experience of paternalism and dependency persists, as shown by some S1s waiting to act for some "boss" orders; or assuming that the solutions should come from those who rule and not from themselves.

- Most recommendations produced in the focal groups were later introduced by the organization's leaders in self-paced and organic processes.

- The positive changes the OCC introduced in the management of its operational units (S1) proved fundamental for effectively responding and adapting to the adversities that the COVID-19 pandemic:
    - Health committee with young leaders from each zone
    - WhatsApp Group (*S3)
    - Google Survey to define S2 measures

- New and young leaderships emerged and became visible.
- By December 2020 a new board was elected, with two young professional women elected as legal representative and president.
- This board has been acclaimed for refreshing the leadership style and the management models of the OCC while being more accountable and committed to internal regulations' compliance

THANK YOU!