

**Annex 12 Contribution of Indigenous Knowledge to the Sustainability  
use of Natural Resources and potential geopark development -  
Research Design (Bhutan) 2025**

**IGCP Project number and Title: 751 4GEON**

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## Contribution of Indigenous Knowledge to the Sustainability use of Natural Resources and potential geopark development - Research Design (Bhutan)

Official professional event dedicated to sustainable tourism and geoparks, as well as research on the contribution of Indigenous knowledge to the sustainability use of natural resources and potential geopark development are activities in line with the Memorandum on Cooperation between Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic and National Environment Commission of Kingdom of Bhutan 2013 (attached), specifically section 2, which concerns "nature protection in ecologically sensitive areas, especially in national parks." The research is the first implementation activity of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Royal Thimphu College (signed by its President on 13 October 2025) and the University of Hradec Králové.

### Official professional event on sustainable tourism and geoparks (12-17 October 2025)

The actual research stay was preceded by an official professional event on sustainable tourism in natural parks and geoparks (12-17 October 2025), organized by the Embassy of the Czech Republic in India and Bhutan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic) in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Bhutan. In addition to a technical seminar, this event includes a visit to Jigme Dorji in National Park.

### Itinerary of the research on Indigenous knowledge related to the use of natural resources and their contribution to the sustainability of tourism and the potential development of geoparks in Bhutan (October 19 – 25, 2025)

**Sunday October 19, 2025**

Research briefing (Thimphu) - Preparation of research fieldwork

**Monday October 20, 2025**

Departure to Gangtey

Field research at locality RL1 in Gangtey

**Tuesday October 21, 2025**

Field research at locality RL1 in Gangtey

**Wednesday October 22, 2025**

Departure to Gasu (Jigme Dorji National Park)

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Field research at locality RL3 in Gasa

### Thursday October 23, 2025

Departure to Laya (Jigme Dorji National Park)

Field research at locality RL3 in Laya

### Friday October 24, 2025

Field research at locality RL3 in Laya (participatory observation of Laya festival)

### Saturday October 25, 2025

Departure to Thimphu

Research debriefing

Departure to Paro

### Sunday October 26, 2025

Departure to Czechia

## Research framework

**Research objective:** The research focuses on the traditional knowledge and practices of local Indigenous communities related to the use of natural resources and their contribution to the sustainability of tourism and the potential development of geoparks. It is aimed at identifying traditional environmental knowledge and its potential to enhance tourism sustainability in the area and to contribute to potential geopark development.

**Research question:** Which are the traditional knowledge and practices of local communities related to the use of natural resources and how they contribute to the sustainability of tourism in their territories and how they could contribute to the potential development of geopark there?

**Research strategy:** Qualitative framework

**Research methodology:** Ground Theory Method used for both data collection on three research localities as well as for data analysis.

**Research techniques:** Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, participatory observation, field diaries and photo documentation. Informants included in the research were persons from local communities living in the protected and rural areas (Figure 1). The outline for interviews and focus groups was developed prior to the start of the research, the data elaboration will be refined possibly by a panel of experts.

**Research localities** (approximately two days for each research site):

RL1 – **Gangtey**, Ramsar wetland – glacial valley and Gangtey Monastery

RL2 – **Gasa**, Jigme Dorji National Park – hot springs and Tashi Thongmon Dzong

RL3 – **Laya**, Jigme Dorji National Park – northern-most Bhutanese settlement (3.800 mas), 110 inhabitants and intangible heritage (Laya festival)

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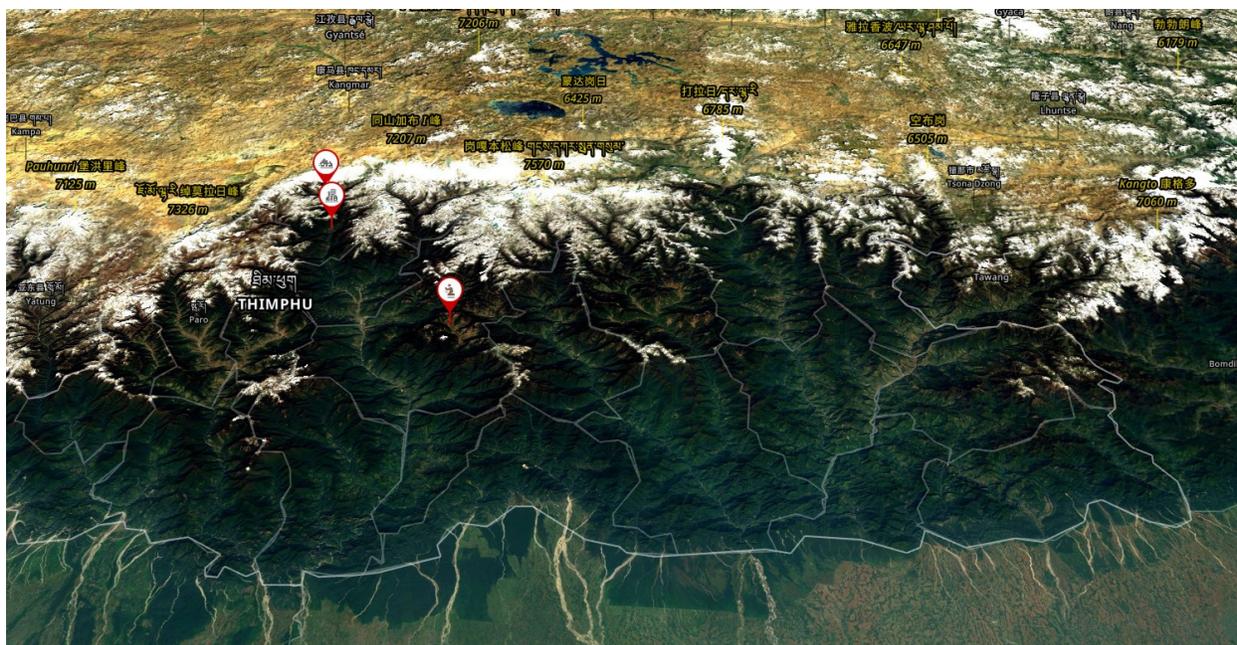


Figure 1 Research area. Created in Mapy.cz, 30.10. 2025

**Research ethics:** The ethical aspects of the research were consulted with the RTC experts.

### Research participants

**Martina Pásková**, *University of Hradec Králové*



Martina Pásková is an associate professor at the Tourism Department at the University of Hradec Králové. Her research domains are human geography, ethno-ecology and geo-anthropology, including topics of geoheritage interpretation, tourism sustainability, geoparks management and indigenous and local knowledge regarding nature and Earth. She is a member of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council; Executive Board of the Global Geoparks Network, Environmental Commission of the Czech Academy of Sciences; Society of Tourism Scientific Experts; and a chairwoman of the Environmental Section of the Czech Commission for UNESCO. She works at the Ministry of Environment as a chairwoman of the National Geoparks Council. She is an UNESCO Global Geoparks evaluator.

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**Deki Yangsom**, *Royal Thimphu College*

She holds an MA in Sociology and Social Anthropology from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in India. She was the recipient of the prestigious Indian Ambassador's Scholarship, and Bhutanese Knowledge for Indigenous Development (B-KIND) Scholarship, 2022. After earning a BA (Distinction) in Anthropology from Royal Thimphu College (RTC) under DAHE scholarship, she was engaged as a researcher at Tarayana Centre for Research and Development, a think-tank and a research arm of the Tarayana Foundation. She is interested in the anthropology of the Himalayas

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as an ethnographic field, and the themes of climate change and ecology, religion and ritual, livelihood and vulnerabilities in the Bhutan highlands. Her current research engagement has been in the emergent fields of Environmental Humanities and Multispecies Studies in Bhutan's climate change context. Drawing on her research work, she is also engaged as a Climate Advocate, working closely with various youth organisations in Bhutan. For the love of reading, she manages a small online library called Circulating Library.

### **Taiwo Temitope Lasisi**, *University of Hradec Králové*



Taiwo Temitope Lasisi is a Postdoctoral researcher at Department of Recreation and Tourism, Faculty of Informatics and Management in University of Hradec Králové, Czech Republic. Her research interest includes tourism management, tourist behavior, human resource management, and environmental sustainability.

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