



# International Permaculture Community

## MEMBERSHIP CONTRACT

Section 1 of the IPC Membership Contract

## General Information

Last updated July/20/2022

This Membership Contract is a collection of all the guidelines & rules for persons who are engaged in the International Permaculture Community (IPC) project, whether they be work exchange visitors, trial participants, tribe members or the dependents of these.

Changes to this contract must be made through our communities democratic model (see Decision Making Process page). The changes will be immediately effective once the results are known. The tribe members will be responsible for editing this Contract accordingly and publishing the new version with the appropriate date on our website and attaching the printed changes to the paper documents printed and accessible in the community.

As an intentional community in development, we have chosen to make public our inner workings, this contract and the by-laws within it, through our website, so that there is full transparency and the possibility for open dialog about our techniques. It may also inspire other communities to use parts of it as they wish to and we offer it freely.

This document covers novel processes unique to our community. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions about the Membership Contract.

An open mind/spirit and a commitment to collaboration and personal growth are prerequisites to becoming a tribe member. We recommend anyone interested in joining the community to read this Contract.

The main sections of the Contract are:

- Section 1: [General information](#)
- Section 2: [Legal Dynamics](#)
- Section 3: [Decision Making Process](#)
- Section 4: [Shared Economy Model](#)
- Section 5: [Land Stewardship Model](#)
- Section 6: [Other Social Agreements](#)
- Section 7: [Membership Process](#)
- Section 8: [Agreement Signature Page](#)

You can also visit our [Current Bylaws and Community Parameters Webpage](#) to give you an idea of all the variables which we have or can tweak in our Governance, Economy and General Community. This website should be updated when changes arise and the page is a new addition to the IPC Tribe as of July 2022.

## **Contract Terminology**

### **Definitions**

- **International Permaculture Community Inc.** - The legal entity which holds the land in trust with the objective of finding a balance between the natural environment and the human stewards - the tribe, on the land. Owned collectively by all adult members of the community.
- **Shawoho** - stands for Shared Work Hours
- **Tribe** - The collective Participants of the community, also referred to as the community, the eco-village, the association.

### **Synonym References**

- Full member, member, Tribe Member, Full Participant, Participant and villager
- Interim Participant and Trial Participant and Trial Member are synonyms

*\* Many words are given definitions within the document itself. If you think something should be added here please recommend it to us. Thank you.*

## Legal Dynamics

- [The Relationship Between the Land, the Legal Entity & Community Participants](#)
- [Participant Responsibilities](#)
- [Panamanian Residency and Citizenship](#)

### **The Relationships Between the Land, the Legal Entity & Community Participants**

The International Permaculture Community is an association of individual Participants and their dependents. This Association, also known as the Tribe or the community has been granted permission to steward land which the IPC Corporation owns.

Note, originally it was intended that the legal entity be a Land Trust by the name of Community Earth, however due to legal statutes being different in differing countries it made more sense for several reasons. to the core team, to establish a Limited Corporation in the country of Panama in 2020, with it being the legal owner of the property instead. However the internal dynamics of the IPC Inc. allows this corporation to operate more like a co-operative than a traditional enterprise; each adult Participant that becomes a Steward will be registered in the books of the Corporation as being a member of the Association (The IPC). Each Steward thus becomes a shareholder of the Corporation as well as of the collective enterprises under the IPC Inc. umbrella. This way, the leaseholder (the IPC Tribe) have a direct say in the on going decisions and responsibilities of the Corporation, as do any previous benefactors (persons), reducing the expenses of the Corporation while also securing the development and stability of the community in perpetuity. No person or legal entity can have more than one share in the IPC Inc. and no person or legal entity can hold a share if they are not also recognized tribe members of the IPC Association. Once a Participant leaves the community for good, they are also duly removed as a share holder of the Corporation. However not all the Board of Directors of the IPC Inc. have to be Participants of the International Permaculture Community Association.

As part of its mandate, the IPC Inc. managed by its Board of Directors is responsible for it's legal requirements in the country of Panama, responsible for the writing of the IPC ecological charter and the compliance thereof by the stewards as well as establishing and keeping the internal zoning of the land in good standing and in public scrutiny. This general zoning has been established and will be calculated by percentage of land to simplify the work involved. See [Physical Elements - space uses of land, village and farm](#) to see those details. These zones are usually but not limited too Preserved Natural Habitat, Agricultural, Food Forests & Village zones. This simplified method also allows for the Tribe to develop a more detailed Permaculture Master Plan that take on a holistic land usage approach, interwoven and overlapping zones for ideal sustainable outcomes.

The Tribe as a collective association of free persons are responsible in keeping to the ecological charter and paying any land taxes that pertain to the land, buildings and general maintenance costs.

Stewardship, rather than ownership is the model of which agreements are made to occupy, work, maintain and use the lands. See our [Stewardship Model](#) for details.

A 90% majority is needed to change any of the public laws of the IPC Inc. such as its By-laws as well as The Ecological Charter, The Membership Contract and The General Zoning decisions. In the case of possible insolvency, the decisions shall be based on 100% consensus.

Once a Participant leaves the community for good, they are also duly removed as a share holder of the Corporation.

## **Participant Responsibilities**

In exchange for full membership and so long as the membership contract and the ecologic charter are respected, Participants are guaranteed a personal space on the land to steward, a say in all the matters of community including the cooperative ventures and access to the benefits that the land and the community and its ventures can offer. The Contract gets into the details of Participant responsibilities and the general functioning of the community.

Each role and/or task that Participants play carry their own responsibilities. There is a detailed spreadsheet entitled the 'The Participants Responsibility Breakdown', not available on-line, which is a work in progress. This spreadsheet is a tool for Participants on the land to use as the information is in a format that is more concise and condensed than in this Contract and can be readily updated as our needs and circumstances change. The spreadsheet and this Contract must not contradict one another. If there is any doubt of authenticity or regulation, this Contract over rules the spreadsheet.

A summary of the general privileges and responsibilities of being a Community Earth Participant follows;

Each Participant will:

- Choose an available piece of land they can steward as their home / personal space of 786 square meters (28m x 28m) or (8460.4 square feet);
- Have the right to assist meetings of any of the cooperatives within the community;
- Have the right to vote on any issue that pertains to them within the community;
- Take on the responsibility of completing the minimum Shared Work Hours (Shawoho) per month;
- Take on the responsibilities of being a member of the International Permaculture Community Corporation without remuneration beyond Shawoho;
- Have the right to share in the harvest and goods produced by the community and monies (paid out monthly) made by the collective works of the community, minus expenses, through the 'Share the Wealth Dividends';
- Have the right to divest of their participation from the community and reclaim their buildings cost minus any depreciation through a new member when that new participant has

paid their membership fees in full and been approved by the Tribe (or unless some other agreement has been formally granted through an IPC Inc. general meeting).

- Have the right to participate in all the enriching community activities at cost (at the cheapest rate).
- Pay their fair share of communal maintenance costs as any other tribe member including any taxes on communal infrastructure).

## **Panamanian Residency and Citizenship**

Although the Tribe can help guide you through the process, it is the responsibility of each Participant and visitor to ensure their legal stay in Panama.

For all foreigners who do not need Visas, a quick jaunt across the border to Costa Rica would ensure your legal stay within the country for 3 or 6 months depending on which part of the globe you hail from. As a group we can organize such trips quarterly.

There are many ways to get a legitimate residency and citizenship and this will differ depending on your skills, experience and/or your income or savings. Please refer to <http://visaspanama.com/english/index.html> for Panamanian visa and residency information. As a community we may be able to help those enter and stay who cannot qualify on their own.

## Decision Making Processes

The democratic processes we use will enable each Participant to fairly and efficiently partake in the information gathering process, deliberation and vote on the issues that arise in the community. Each person has the right to speak and be heard and each tribe member has a vote. These prerequisites are true for both the decisions made in the domain of the IPC Corporation as well as for the Association.

As of this time all decisions have been made by consensus, and this is fairly painless to attend too when we are only a few tribe members living a similar experience. As the community grows we seek to incorporate aspects of both Sociocracy and Direct Democracy into our governance. You can read more about those models via the links below: [Sociocracy Model](#); a social democratic process growing in popularity [Direct Democracy Model](#); with novel approaches to movable majority percentages

Until we have decided on such an elaborate platform, only meetings with all Participants present (in person, or through some technological means) will be excepted as a quorum for making decisions and any changes to the Membership Contract will need an 80% majority.

Note that for IPC businesses or projects, the manager or co-op makes decisions for the ongoing operations and smaller meetings can but are not always needed for such decisions to be made.

# Shared Economy Model

- [Introduction to the IPC Sharing Economy](#)
- [Wish / Supply Balance](#)
- [Work Sharing Agreement](#)
- [Projects, Cooperatives & Businesses](#)
- [Resource Sharing Model](#)
- [Income Sharing Model](#)

## Introduction to the IPC Sharing Economy

The structure of an economy is an important piece to any community, small or large, because it defines the interactions and the methods of those interactions between persons and the world of goods and services. Often overlooked however is that the structure of any economy affects and is affected by all aspects of life, and any economy which denies this reality has inherent problems from the beginning. For example, in modern day economies, elements such as the environment are often overlooked or devalued through cost externalization, creating problems such as pollution and over-exhaustion of natural resources. A realistic, strong, and sustainable economy should therefore be a holistic one and include as many elements and indicators as possible. Communication between these elements and indicators and all the people within the economy is in our collective interests to perfect.

Furthermore, in price system economics, land is considered like any other resource. The core team has deliberately separated land from economy as it merits a class of its own because it persists beyond us, gives us grounding, provides us with all the other resources we use and is ultimately sacred. Please see our [Land Stewardship Model](#) pages for more details on how land is used publicly or privately in our community.

The IPC is an egalitarian community, with a resource sharing as well as income sharing economic model that uses a commitment of shared work to replace the medium of money as exchange. Participants will work primarily in areas or on projects that motivate and interest them and sometimes rotate work that is less desirable to get our collective needs met. It is also an economy where each individual partakes equally to their ability in the total work.

Although this document may seem long, it is streamlined in comparison to the rules and regulations in any capitalist system which is so convoluted and compartmentalized that each person knows only a bit of what's really going on or the laws concerning it. Here we try to be simple and transparent while also setting the ground rules for a fully functional alternative. Each paragraph of the sharing economy model presented here has been decided on carefully. If you are unsure why something is one way or another, the core team will be glad to explain it to you. Furthermore, if the tribe sees ways to streamline or improve on this Sharing Style Economy model the possibility for evolution is

built into this contract. In fact, this version has already been updated a few times since we began living together on the land. We are all learning and finding ways to improve the balance between us. We have to be serious in our commitment and our strategy to be successful and be curious and playful in our daily interactions if we are to create magic.

Our sharing economy model strives to take into account the larger picture and all the interconnected elements that contribute to our living and is embodied in the interaction between participants with the 'Do what you can, take what you need' approach. Equality, therefore is not measured by fair distribution but by responding to each of our individual needs.

We come together to share in the abundance of the natural world, to share our dreams and collective efforts, and to share in the harvest and the diverse services stemming from the upkeep and initiatives of the Participants and cooperatives. This will ensure a good balance of knowledge, wisdom, creativity, camaraderie, efficiency and fun.

Participants should realize and accept that we as individuals have not come into the world with equal gifts nor equal wealth, however we are all equally important, and if we want to live in harmony it is in our best interest to share. This concept, although quite simple can cause angst in some. In fact, any system of sharing the wealth and sharing the burden (gains and losses) is unfamiliar to most in the industrialized world and requires a letting go of old mentalities and habits and accepting that together we are stronger, even if we do not always agree. The larger a group we are, the more robust our sustainability can be. This community is a tribe, a family. Sharing in the wealth may not get you a Farari but you should have access to a car when you need it, sharing the burden means there are more heads, hearts and hands to face life's difficulties.

It is also in our personal interest to help others achieve their possible best because we share in their success, and if we become aloof then we may suffer the consequences of their losses. This community is only possible because people are willing to share. Share a place, share work, share goods, share responsibilities, share the costs, share their fullness and share the dream.

Techniques and information will be open sourced and encouraged to be shared between all members. This creates resilience, a security to maintain and succeed in the projects that are undertaken. Sharing of knowledge and work effort also improves the chances for more discoveries to occur and is a further cohesive force.

Our economic structure includes the following concepts and responsibilities: Wish /Supply Balance, Shared Work Hours agreement (Shawoho), Cooperative businesses, Resource Sharing model & Income Sharing model.

## **Wish / Supply Balance**

The community bases its production from the wishes (needs and wants) that the participants have expressed to the whole. For persons not used to reflecting on their needs, this process may take some time to get accustomed to. Sometimes it is not always possible to know ones needs from the beginning, but as we engage in this community over time, we will better understand ourselves, our needs, our fundamental desires and we will get better at asking for them and manifesting them as a



group. In the mean time, we also have the possibility to purchase what we need from the outside when we are either unable to plan our self sufficiency or unable to deliver on certain items which the community will probably never produce such as computers.

Participants and their dependents will be asked to explain their needs in detail so that the whole community can set out to supply or manifest those needs with the participant. It is important therefore that every person express their needs. We will offer support through and to support that we will offer self exploration and self expression workshops which will help in assessing surface needs as well as deeper needs, and how that is important in our economy. Needs will be expressed verbally and through written form and naturally will change with time. In order to keep track of needs and wants, as a tribe we will develop Wish Lists. Each participant can easily add things to the Wish lists, under personal columns and communal columns.

Projects, Cooperatives and Businesses also have their Wish Lists. This helps everyone find work to be done as well as help the community as a whole plan for future inventories of communal materials and natural resources.

As each of us are working towards providing needs for everyone in the community we must also respect our own needs. If you are picking fruit in the agricultural cooperative and you want to eat some, then do so. This is supplying the need that one has right away. This applies to all aspects of the community. Those doing the production of something will always have a chance to profit from it first and we want to acknowledge that this is not a negative thing.

Supply, is fundamental to any successful economy - one that provides all the participants with their needs and wants within reason - as long as it doesn't tax the resource or cause damage to the environment or other people. Since we will already be exploring our needs, we will produce lists of things we personally and collectively seek and from our collected efforts will eventually provide. Note that this is not a planned economy. We do not decide what gets supplied or how or when, but we do try to supply what each of us is willing and capable of doing and have faith that much of each persons needs and the communities needs are met through this process as we grow in members and efficiency. As our community is still embedded in the 'price system', we will also be able to purchase some of those needs we are not able to produce as a community. The future goal will be to network with similar communities worldwide to diversify our resilience.

Pure supply also exists in the community, in the form of services as well as when there is an abundance of any kind. A provider of a service makes it known that they are available to the community and can be thus engaged as the need for their service arises.

On the supply side, it will be prudent for us to keep track of resources used in the community. Sustainable use monitoring, making notes of what natural resources and energy we use to make them, to later be discussed to see if we cannot improve our communities efficiency and ecological foot print over time.

# Work Sharing Agreement

The heart of the engine of the Sharing Economy is the engagement of the Shared Work Hours (Shawoho) by participants. It is where the wealth of the community bears fruit and increases over time, until we achieve a comfortable sustainable balance. This is mostly done without the medium of money in the IPC. It is done through direct effort. Throughout history, each person's time and effort are, and have been, the only true accumulator of human generated wealth. We tap into this people power by arranging an egalitarian contract between participants which is this work sharing agreement. In essence, the Shawoho is how we supply our collective and personal wishes (needs and desires).

We will take our individual and collective needs and brainstorm ways in which we can reduce the work load and share the resources, (energy and waste streams included) and with those collective needs calculate an approximate amount of hours it will take to provide us all with the needs and benefits we desire. We then take this number and divide it by the number of full participants involved. If there are not enough hours to provide for them both needs and wants then obviously the needs will be met first when deciding on our shared work in the community to become more self sustaining. It is in our interest to be as efficient as possible, yet also enjoy what we are doing.

Each participant takes on the responsibility to complete a certain amount of Shawoho in a certain period of time. The amount of Shared Work Hours changes as our collective needs change.

The Shawoho is like a river, it continues to flow. There is no banking of these hours. The clock is reset each month. It is the participant responsibility to create a schedule that suits them in order to accomplish the efforts of these minimums. It could be a personal satisfaction, and can only improve our situation as a community, if members decide to put in more hours than their Shawoho per month but there is no further compensation or calculation made for such extra effort put in and it is our hope that if participants do, they do so from the heart and to fulfill some inner personal desire. Furthermore, we establish a minimum Shawoho to have a bench mark for us to work with and from. By this we also intend that each individual respect themselves, their individual person, and not to lose themselves solely in the collective. Minimum Shawoho thus gives a clear line of effort put in, without putting an over burden on anyone, knowing that this minimum Shawoho is the only one expected and that people should also take care of their own needs and desires directly (have time for intimate self).

When engaging themselves in work, participants should express their intent to those who may benefit, that is those who have put a task on the Community Wish Lists. For weekly tasks or daily tasks participants can simply put their name beside the task and time (schedule) on the list. When they have completed the task they come back and fill out the hours it took, sign and date, and any notes if applicable.

The Shawoho hours is the currency of our community and it is based mostly on the honor system; what a Participant claims they have done. However, there will be some guidelines that we will develop further on together as time goes by. It has been suggested that there could be a service rendered box, for those who have received a service from a participant which matches the Wish List and where opinions, suggestions or other notes concerning the service can be added. This would be

written up by the participant receiving the service. Lastly complaints may be brought up about ones work or non work through meetings or in mediation.

There are many things that need getting done and sometimes not enough interest on the part of members to take on certain necessary tasks. If such tasks are not being dealt with we will have to assign tasks, by rotation, or a roll of the die.

IPC participants have already designed a digital app. architecture for such an economy. The program is intended to support a larger alternative moneyless economy and we are hoping to get socially conscious programmers interested in developing such a tool. For our community it would not be primordial however it could be useful even if we are going to see each other often throughout a week.

All hours which go toward providing the needs of the people in the community are considered equal unless otherwise referred to in this contract.

**Hours that are included in Shawoho include:**

- Rendering a service to a participant or a participants dependents
- Work in the village / community lists
- Work in the project, cooperative, or business lists
- Work off land in which the participant includes their out of community income

**Hours that are not included in Shawoho include:**

- Producing a good that was not on the Wish Lists
- Personal interests, unless they satisfy a need of the community
- Providing goods from the outside unless specifically called for by others or the community at a Community Meeting. *\*Note that goods from the outside can be given to the Tribe as donations. If there are goods that we cannot produce then a form of trade may ensue for cash or resources / products exchange between parties or other communities.*

**Hours that are partially included in Shawoho include:**

- A Steward and/or their partner(s) who are engaging themselves on the construction of their own home(s) on their stewarded land (1/2 time)

At this pioneering stage, the current Shawoho has and looks to continue to be 35 hours a week (or 140 hours per month). This will change depending on how participants cope, the amount of participants and how our wealth accumulates. Eventually, once the village has enough buildings to accommodate our needs and once the food forest, agricultural and other projects get more established, we are hoping that these hours will stabilize somewhere between 20 to 30 hours per week (80 to 120 hours per month).

So long as participants are living in the eco-village, they are expected to share the wealth they make in terms of hours worked inside or outside the community, with the tribe, at least up to the Current Shawoho. Participants do not have to share the wealth they may be making through stocks, bonds, investments in other businesses, rental properties etc., unless they desire to or unless they are retired members (see more details about the elderly further down). The same applies if they are working

away for many months (unless the work is part of a cooperative venture). Also any hours worked that surpasses the Shawoho while working outside, that generates wealth for the individual, is theirs to keep. (See [Income Sharing Model](#) below for more details).

Hours of Absences: Every year a participant has a fixed amount of hours in which they can off set their shared work hours to allow some flexibility as for cases such as being sick, spending time with impromptu visits by family, emergencies and/or other needs they may have. There are a total of 50 absent hours allocated for the year. These do not all have to be used, however they cannot be accumulated in following years. They reset every year, the date set depending on the date of entrance of the participant into the community or percentage of what is left in any given year. In either case, all services and benefits including the Share the Wealth Dividends are available to them.

If a participant leaves on the first or last day of a month there are no calculation of hours to make. If however they depart at any other time of the month their Shawoho will be calculated as follows:

Take the decided on Shawoho for that month and divide this number by the number of days in the month, always 28, then multiply by the number of days the participant will be staying. This will give us the number of hours that participant is responsible for during the rest of the month in question.

If for some reason, the participant must leave suddenly (such as emergency medical attention to family afar) and they did not complete their hours for the number of days so far in the month, the hours missing will be calculated and added on to their hours upon their return. These hours could alternatively be displaced by the Hours of Absences (see above) if the participant chooses.

If a participant leaves for long periods of time (more than 6 months) as a Part-time Member does, they are partially detracting themselves from their responsibilities and privileges and as such, unless other arrangements have been made, will no longer be entitled to any resource shares, nor income shares until they return. Also, their steward land lot may be subject to other uses while they are gone - see the [Land Stewardship Model](#) pages for more details). Participants will still be responsible for their equal share of land taxes and other legal expenses of the community.

It is possible for a participant to leave for long periods of time and still be entitled to resource shares, income shares and leaving their stewarded lot empty or with their dependents, if they are abroad doing work for an IPC cooperative or business or if as individuals they decide to pay into the community coffers a portion of their income. (See [Income Sharing Model](#) below for more details).

The philosophy behind some decisions made here are necessary to elaborate on: ... we started with 'Is it fair if some people work 20 hours a week... if they are getting everything from the community such as activities, use of buildings, tools, food and services freely through the site or Shawoho while others work 35 hours. Is the money distribution the only difference and is that fair? After much deliberation we have decided that the less work, less income makes sense and is fair enough, but the access to everything else needs adjustment and can vary over time yet instead of limiting services or pay as you go which would not be in line with our ideas of equality, etc... we have decided on a compensation fee for tribe members who decide to engage in less than the Current Shawoho. That compensation is different depending on a members involvement, explained in the paragraphs below.

The idea here is 2 fold; first it allows people the freedom to take more time for themselves if they need too and secondly the community is compensated and because the monies go to the Village Coffe (as opposed to the Residents Coffe) it does not entice these people in taking too much time off. In the future... hopefully, if the businesses are going strong, it may be advantageous for most of us to work less by opting out this way if the communal Wish lists (needs) require us still to have a high Shawoho like 35 hours.

Barring the exceptions in this contract, a regular adult member cannot reduce their Shawoho below 20 hours a week or 80 hours per month average - even with this money compensation option. That means all such participants predetermine their hours between 20 and the Current Shawoho when participating. These hours can be changed on a monthly basis, and made known at a weekly meeting. (Note: a Part-time member has nothing to do with the amount of hours but is there relation to how often they are living or engaging in Shawoho for the IPC ... in other words its not someone with a reduced work schedule).

For all members who go below their Current Shawoho (above and beyond their Hours of Absence mentioned above) the compensation option is based on the difference between the hours worked (less than Shawoho) and the Current Shawoho. These are the amount of hours a member must compensate for by paying to the Village Coffe. Each hour of compensation equals \$5 at this time and is one of our variable parameters that can be updated when the Tribe sees fit. So if a participant decides to take on 25 hours a week they would be compensating for 10 hours and would pay \$50 into the Village Coffe. They still receive their shared income for their worked hours.

Off setting Shawoho completely as a full-time engaged member is also possible through another monetary compensation method however the sum of these compensations must not be greater than 8 weeks per year. As in the other method, a member only gets Share the Wealth Dividends for the amount of hours worked. The compensation is \$100 per week that is destined directly to the Village Coffe. Part-time resident or a Full Time tribe members engaging in a reduced capacity (those who have decided that normally they will work less than the Shawoho per week/month) are only entitled to two weeks for this compensation option.

If a participant does not complete their Shared Work Hour minimums per month the community will discuss the situation at our meetings. If this occurs often their membership may be put into question through the democratic model and could be revoked.

The following paragraphs give an example to explain the Shawoho concept in operation:

There is a massage therapist living in the community. She has offered her services as a masseuse to the community. She also wants to do a massage workshop to teach other people massage. When catering to the larger society this could be a way of generating income for the community. She lets everyone in the community know first then publicizes to the larger public. She does this because we respect the community participants needs first. Whether those needs are edible goods or those needs are services such as the massages or even the training of the massage we want to allow participants first access, part of the abundance we are working together for.

In this scenario Shawoho hours would break down as follows:

If one participant takes the course, then the hours of the teaching will count toward the Shawoho

hours and if more than one participant takes the course, the same amount of time would be counted toward Shawoho hours. In other words no more time is counted; time to teach for one equals the time to teach for all, unless it actually takes more time in which case the longer amount of time counts. For example, a student stays to ask some more questions for another 1/2 hour. That half hour will be counted as Shawoho hours. The course may have taken some time to prepare and this too may be counted.

If no one from the community takes the course and there are monies generated from the labor that are destined for the community, then the Shawoho hours still count toward Shawoho. This is so because most labor that is sold outside of the community becomes shared profits so their hours preparing and giving the workshop therefore count toward their community commitments. (See [Income Sharing Model](#) below for more details).

Elderly (retired/pensioned) or disabled members: If not partaking in any Shawoho the retiree must give 60% of their total income if they have any (pension, residual income) and are also not eligible for Shared Income Dividends. However they still have access to all the goods and services that the community offers to one another free of charge (personal services, extra food and goods, etc..) and of course they are still stewards of the land and have their place. This offset helps the community with the commodity of money for the things we all need, including for the retiree, through infrastructure, tools, materials and businesses.

If elderly or disabled tribe members choose to take on Shawoho they are compensated in the following sliding scale calculations:

For every hour of Shawoho not worked an amount equal to the money (sixty percent of their pension) divided by the number of minimum hours (of Shawoho) would be accumulated and deposited by them as Community Income every month before the Share the Wealth Dividends are calculated.

Example. Charlie gets a pension of 1000 USD per month. 60% would be \$600 for the full offset. However if a pensioner takes on Shawoho then the sliding scale works as follows in this example: Six hundred is divided by the number of weeks of Shawoho and then divided again into the minimum Shawoho hour segments. In this example, this would mean 4 weeks in the month divided by the total of the 60% of pension which gives us \$150 per week. We then divide the Current Shawoho which at the time of writing is 35 hours for our example, which gives us a total of \$4.29 per hour for that particular retiree. Each actual hour worked is then added up and subtracted from the Minimum Shawoho. If the pensioner worked 20 hours they would need to put in \$4.29 multiplied by the hours remaining, in our case 15 hours of Shawoho to offset. They would therefore in this example give \$64.35 for that particular week as opposed to the full \$150.

It is our hopes that retirees are engaging in the Shawoho only because it suits them and not because they are in a bad financial situation. Of course when one is part of Shawoho they are also entitled to the Share the Wealth Dividends equal to the hours they have contributed. So as in the example above, for the 20 hours worked they would get their share of income. See [Income Sharing Model](#) below for those type of calculations.

Please note that further dynamics to Shawoho hours and the economy can also be found in the [Private Home Agreement](#) in the Land Stewardship Model, as it pertains to personal private spaces.

IPC time references: Each week is a period of 7 days with 24 hours each day. Each month is a period of 4 weeks therefore exactly 28 days in each month. In each IPC year therefore there are approximately 13 month periods but there are still 52 weeks per year. It may take some adjustment at the beginning, however it is a system that will greatly help simplify our calculation of hours. We will still keep the days of the week and the months from 1-13 and will only need to be referenced in relationship to Shawoho. The future app may also help us in this regard.

## **Projects, Cooperatives & Businesses**

Projects, Businesses or Cooperatives are also referred to as Production Elements.

Projects are production elements that are non income generating, and fill a need of the tribe (one, some or all of its members). They can be one time events or ongoing projects, such as a Resourcary or Communications hub, which are managed by those intent on seeing the project succeed, offset by their Shawoho of course.

Businesses & Cooperatives are production elements with pecuniary gain in mind, that tap into an opportunity for the community to generate an income while also supplying the needs of the tribe. The only difference between the business and cooperative is the way they are managed.

Businesses are like sole proprietorship or partnerships or can also be made up of larger groups of people that use a manager to be in charge of the day to day operations of production while Cooperatives are groups of people who manage themselves via democratic processes and share fully in the responsibility of the day to day operations of production.

Cooperatives and Businesses are entities made up of a participant or groups of participants who are working on activities to deliver a need to the community and/or sell goods or services to the wider community in order to bring in the commodity of money.

Cooperatives and business in the IPC do not have individual shareholders and they are not considered in the same legal status as real living persons such as is the norm in the modern capitalist system. Each Cooperative, Business or Project is registered and owned under the International Permaculture Community Corporation. IPC inc. members are also community participants and thus help choose the overall direction of all cooperatives, businesses and projects and benefit from any wealth generated from those equally under the IPC inc. umbrella.

Cooperatives and businesses can steward lands and buildings depending on their needs and what is available.

### **Cooperatives & Businesses must:**

- Keep an ongoing Wish List
- Keep an ongoing tentative work schedule
- Keep track of all goods and resources they use or are borrowing.
- Keep a record of events
- Keep a record of expenses
- Keep track of all worked hours

All above responsibilities must have one or more participants listed in the cooperative log/book (functions) which will undertake said responsibilities. In most cases it is the cooperative members that decide amongst themselves who will take on what responsibilities.

All records of Cooperatives and Businesses must be accessible to all Participants and should be published somewhere for participants to easily access. At this stage it is accessible through the village accountant.

Production Elements can be decided on and pushed through by the community voting process or can sprout organically by an individual member. The former is simply done by initiating an issue through the democratic process concerning a new production element (Project, Cooperative, Business) at one of our meetings. Then the village can deliberate on it and after a minimum of a weeks time vote it in or refuse it. Refusal could be for the simple fact that we may not have the extra hands, time to take it on, resources or funds. The other way could be that someone, out of their own personal initiative, creates something that can then become a production element onto itself. This could then be talked about after the fact and made official through the democratic model or at a Monthly Meeting. The benefit to make it official is that the hours worked can be counted toward the Shared Work Hours and thus someones personal initiative could be counted on an economic front from the point it is recognized. 'Economic' here does not mean money oriented but rather creating a good or service or filling a requested need, which may generate money but not necessarily, and can be counted toward a participants Shawoho. The IPC will accept a grace period of 2 months from such personal initiative to offset Shawoho hours if the project, cooperative or business is adopted officially as a Tribal affair.

In the case of Businesses, if there is more than one person who is qualified or who would like to manage the enterprise, a manager or joint managers (depending on the size of the production element) may be elected by the community as needed. Managers can change with time, either resigning or called to resign through the democratic model.

Each manager of an IPC business and one member of each cooperative can get a communications refund. They can be reimbursed 50% of the data plans the individual has, up to a maximum of \$20 per month. Furthermore this does not include any hardware or software but strictly the data. Because the line here between business and personal is hazy and because each manager(s) often communicate for business purposes on their personal devices thus subsidizing the community, it seems a just compromise.

Most cooperatives will formally ask the community to cover the costs related to infrastructure and original operating needs through the democratic model to get them started. If accepted, the community will then allocate the amount determined in the democratic model. The cooperative or business or project manager(s) at this point can withdraw the funds that have been allocated in part or in full from the Village Coffers by the designated parties. This gift from the community is given in the hopes that the cooperative, business or project will return dividends one day and/or produce items and services that improve the lives of the participants in the future.

The intended operations are explained in the following paragraphs and we will one day adopt them, however since living here and at this time, July 2022, our expenses for the two businesses we do run and other infusions into other endeavors such as farming and tree pruning services have been



coming directly from the Community monies as and when the needs arise. We have kept track of this on an excel document. The main reason is that we are small and also the income stream is negligible. When there are more members and 2 or more managers of various projects the system explained below will be practiced.

Once a cooperative or business are themselves generating an income, they will not need to ask the community formally for monies, unless there are big changes requiring new expenses which will then need to be cleared through the democratic model again. Instead, cooperatives, businesses or projects may use a portion of their income to fray operating costs. This operating buffer is a percentage between 0% and 50% and is self determined by each group, who must also deliver a copy of the expenses rendered to Village accountant.

These operating funds can also be used for infrastructure costs and marketing tools as well as to pay expertise from outside the community. The latter may be subject to approval by the community and a notice of intent will need to be written on the Community billboard (or eventual App). Another reason for expressing the need for a payed outside expert is the fact that others in the community may also be able to benefit for their own projects, and other businesses and cooperatives may also feel it important and pitch into these expenses via their operating funds.

These operating funds shall not be used for salaries, for beefing up expenses or for any kind of personal benefits, all of which constitutes fraud, and is cause for immediate dismissal from the community.

Earnings after income float buffer (for operating expenses) from each coop or business are delivered to the Village Accountant and are used in their entirety for the Share the Wealth plan. The Share the Wealth Dividends Plan is how villagers through the cooperatives and businesses actually get monies / pecuniary compensations.

Participants and their dependents can use the services of cooperatives, businesses and projects on a first come, first serve basis and with no pecuniary fees of any kind, unless elsewhere stated in this contract.

An example: There is a tourist cooperative, with two projects. The first is a camping business. The second is a horse tour business with 5 horses.

That week, there were 2 campsites used for 2 days which brought in \$40 to the cooperative. The expenses were 1 roll of toilet paper and 2 light bulbs that burnt out. The camping business therefore had \$4 in expenses. Note that some participants time (3 hours), firewood, water, electricity was also used but since these are already coming from the community Shawoho they are not added to the pecuniary expenses. So the monies earned after expenses is \$36 for the camping business.

In the same week there is a horse tour going out with 2 visitors. There is a participant who has put on the Wish List to go up on a tour. As there are enough horses they are invited to the tour and join the adventure. There is no fee for them to do so. The visitors meanwhile pay for the Horse Tour and the business makes \$80. The expenses include a lunch that is offered to the guests but it only cost the business \$2 because most of the food for lunch was produced in the farming cooperative and thus is not considered a pecuniary expense. Note that the tour guide 6 hours and the staff that made

the lunch 1 hour are part of Shawoho and thus are not considered in the pecuniary expenses. So the monies earned after expenses is \$78 for the horse tour business.

The tourist cooperative has thus earned a total of  $(\$36+\$78=)$  \$114 that week. The tourist cooperative had previously decided on an income float buffer of 30%. So they keep 30% of \$104 for their internal uses which now is \$34.20 and deliver the remainder of \$72.80 to the village accountant to disperse of the funds through the Share the Wealth Dividend plan. With that money in the float of the cooperative, the members of that cooperative decide to save the money till they have enough to buy a new saddle, the money will also serve to buy things that they may need during the following week for new guests in the camp grounds. Either way, the buffer acts as an automatic assess tool for the cooperative.

Businesses, Cooperatives and Projects should update their Wish List often so that using the same example, the tourist cooperatives need of a new saddle and toiletries in this case so that the whole community can notice it and perhaps make it, find alternatives or better deals as a Tribe. In this way it is like a constant feedback loop which makes for a better understanding of the businesses and allows the entire Tribe to be a part of the improvements in quality and/or efficiency and thus in a better quality life and income for all the tribe.

## **Resource Sharing Model**

The sharing of the fruits of our labor, that wealth created, transformed and brought forth for the use of others by the participants Shawoho hours, without the need of money as intermediary, manifests in some form of gift to the world. These goods and services created, arise from our varied needs and wants and are equally used up in differing ways. As a matter of simplicity we will call all of this the Communal Gifts and will explore here the different distribution methods and guidelines around them.

When there is an abundance of some good or food, that is when all wishes for that item that were previously stated are supplied, then the extras will be available for all others in the community through the Free Store, as well as the cooperatives, who may transform such extras. Alternatively the tribe may choose that when we have abundance of this or that, we sell it outside of the IPC. For items that could be sold outside and are offered to tribe members they will most likely be sold at production cost to those members first.

If there is not an abundance of some commodity, it will be divided amongst the community participants who have stated their desires prior, then amongst others who desire it at the moment of availability, in equal parts. When there is scarcity, we will need to look at the scarcity and its cause together and see if we cannot remedy the situation for the future.

## **Resourcary**

A collection of sharable goods; also a place (IE. cyberspace), warehouse and/or the institution in charge of such a collection where goods held in common can be borrowed. Here are some of the

other names which could be used in the general or specific types of resourcaries: share shed, clutter house, tool shed, instrument library, library, community stocks, share store to name a few types.

The idea of a Resourcary is that all goods that are not being used by participants on a regular basis, thus all goods that can be shared, could be kept in common places with easy access and a system of borrowing that works efficiently for the community. Some inventory would be required and when things break, we will fix them or find new uses for them. A Resourcary basically facilitates the loaning out and repairing of sharable goods and equipment.

As there will be personal and communal items in the International Permaculture Community we will have an orientation on how to see the difference (tagged) and the protocols to use the items.

The regular wear and tear of items is absorbed by everyone but the negligence or disregard for the item one is using from the community will be frowned upon. If a general disregard or negligence is the cause of a damaged tool then the community may ask for a 50% reimbursement of the value of the item, as we find a new use for it and wait for a replacement.

As a group we should maintain a written and/or video archive of 'best practices' for using goods so that everyone follows the same upkeep (tool care) for collective items. The 'best practices' will be decided on by everyone and may therefore differ from the best practices people already know or what the accustomed local uses are. We will also make training available as needed.

## **Free Store**

A platform to distribute products brought into the economy that are either brought in from the outside, an abundance produced in the community, an item no longer wanted by someone in the community or newly made by participants, cooperatives or businesses that is not directly providing a need of one of the participants. The Free Store is most often the place where extra food will be available for the taking. Literally, it is a first come, first serve with the motto 'take what you need', make available what you don't!

Remember anything produced cannot be taken and then sold. This is not Craigslist! All transactions are money-less here and to take it out of our economy and put it in a money economy is feeding the Price system and taking power away from the sharing economy models. Unless it has been decided by the community beforehand as the case may be for certain cooperatives producing food, we as a Tribe or individuals of that tribe shall not take from the Freestore and sell for pecuniary gain.

## **Warehouses**

Places to store various resources that are not sharable in their nature for use by participants in times of need, especially for infrastructure. Eg. Wood, metal, glass.

In our community it will probably be more like a store shed where an inventory is kept but no one will constantly be there in person.

## **Workshops**

Common use spaces with equipment and expertise. Examples include a jam space (with instruments), an electronics workshop, a woodworking shop etc...

## **Services Centers**

Are places where a service is given which include expertise and the right tools to carry out the service. They can be run by a participant or many, as a cooperative, business or project and usually have a designated location due to equipment necessities. Some examples include: Restaurant, Barbershop, Spa, etc...

## **Income Sharing Model**

Persons who join our community must be willing to share in the profits of their own labors and have a strong desire for wealth sharing in general.

Each participant who is undertaking their Shared Work Hours, is entitled to a payment from the collective works of all participants through the Share the Wealth Dividends plan.

The Share the Wealth Dividends is the plan used to verify all the monies earned from all sectors of the community and the calculations used to redistribute this financial wealth according to what we as a community have already agreed to prior.

All expenses will be kept transparent by a designated village accountant who may or may not be the treasurer of IPC Inc and using a transparent accounting methodology.

All participants, projects, businesses and cooperatives must keep an expense record for the services or goods they rendered that was bought with cash or credit and hand a copy of this to the village accountant.

Net financial income (earnings minus expenses from monies received outside the Tribe) from all participants, projects, businesses and cooperatives are to be delivered to the village accountant on a weekly basis.

The accountant keeps track of all entries and each month writes a summary which the Tribe can consult. An app may help us streamline this accounting method.

The net income is distributed depending on the percentage of village to Residents Coffer ratio, which is deliberated and voted on, not more than quarterly every year. The project began with a Share the Wealth Dividend Plan of 50% of the net income destined for the Village Coffer (community monies) and 50% to the Residents Coffer (participants payouts). See [Current Bylaws and Community Parameters Webpage](#) for this and other up to date parameters in the IPC. When voting on these percentages, there will be a discussion first, then each participant writes their desired new ratio. The collective ratios are averaged out and the community has their new Share the Wealth Dividends ratio.

The Residents Coffers is paid out to all eligible participants on the 1st day of each moon month (every approx. 28 days). Beginning with month 34, year 3 (otherwise known locally as July 28th, 2022). However, month 0, Year 0. was actually October 27th, 2020 the day after Ivan and Jessie (et famille) reunited and began living in the IPC, when the era of the IPC began!!

The total amount in the Residents Coffers is divided between all eligible participants evenly. In case of uneven amounts, rounded to the dollar, the remainder will stay in the Residents Coffers till the next month.

Calculations of the Share the Wealth Dividends, pecuniary kind, begin with the total of all members Shawoho hours taken on that month (up to the minimum only - so up to the Current Shawoho per person only). Then for each member you calculate the percentage those hours represent by multiplying the number of hours worked by 100, divided by the total number of hours worked. For everyone doing their Shawoho this calculation will be the same. For those who worked less the number will vary. That number represents the percentage of the Residents Coffers that members will receive.

For example: Imagine there are 3 members and two fulfill their Shawoho (140 hours each) and one only does 80 hours that month. The total of hours worked together is 360 hours. For the two members who completed Shawoho each 140 hours ( $140 \times 100 / 360$ ) equals 39% of 360 hours. For the other member 80 hours ( $80 \times 100 / 360$ ) represents 22%. Then in an imaginary Residents Coffers of 600 that month the breakdown would be 39% of \$600 = \$234 for each of the two similar members and 22% of \$600 = \$132 for the latter member.

It is the responsibility of the accountant to distribute these funds in person or automatically through bank accounts to the participants.

The monies participants receive from the Residents Coffers are their personal monies, to do with as they see fit, for example - to purchase goods that the community is not willing to purchase collectively or that which cannot be shared, or to save for a rainy day or in an eventual parting from the community, for outside schooling or any other personal use that the tribe is unwilling or unable to provide a participant or they're dependents. This ensures the liberty of some financial freedom for each participant.

The monies the Village Coffers is endowed with goes to pay for communal infrastructure upkeep, repayment of community/project loans, investment in new projects or improvements in old ones, expertise not found in the village, an emergency fund, future land acquisition, legal expenses, country taxes and any other expenditures the community feels comfortable undertaking with those funds.

This income sharing model helps offset personal costs and puts everyone on an equal profit margin for the same amount of work time, regardless of what was actually produced. Effort over production. Quality over quantity. All for one and one for all.

If a participant leaves the community for a few months and works abroad or elsewhere in the country, they do not have to share their earned income. We reason that they will most likely have to incur many more expenses outside. However when participants are gone away for over a month they forgo any income and resource sharing. If they leave temporarily and are still able to complete

their hours for the month or use their Leave of Absence Hours to compensate they are still entitled to the income sharing for that month. Participants leaving the community for a while such as Part-time Tribe members, will have their benefits and Share the Wealth Dividends stopped upon leaving and resume upon return.

Alternatively, participants can opt in to the Share the Wealth Dividends and other benefits by contributing to Shawoho through the earnings they are making elsewhere. This option could be beneficial for families especially in which a participants family is staying on the land and therefore has access to the benefits while they are away working.

A simple week long example of how the Shawoho hours principle and income sharing plays out is illustrated below:

There are 4 people (**A,B,C,D**) in the this example community and the Shawoho is set at 20 hours. The Village Coffers starts with \$200 in it and the Residents Coffers with \$0 in it.

**A.** 5 hours doing the kitchen deep clean. 3 hours giving massage to two other participants (B,C) whom asked for massages and 12 hours preparing and giving a workshop to four people not in Shawoho (visitors), at \$80 per person. No people in the community were present for the workshop. The total earned is therefore \$320 minus some expenses that the community could not supply, for example: Some massage oil which cost the masseuse \$20 was used. So we have a total net income of \$300.

**B.** 2 hours fixing a bicycle for participant D. 18 hours farming (providing food to the participants).

**C.** 15 hours carpentry in village on a communal building. 5 hours fixing the road.

**D.** 3 hours preparing the communal meal of the week. 10 hours facilitating art experiences with the children in the community which was a need which was asked for. \$30 from the Village Coffers was used for art supplies (which are goods that are needed that no one as yet produces). No income was made but the children have expressed their creativeness, which is a psychological development need, plus it was fun!

So, that week, the total brought into the community from the 4 participants was \$300. This income is split between the Village Coffers and Residents Coffers depending on the percentage we have all agreed too. Using a 30% to 70% split between coffers in this example, we deliver \$90 to the Village Coffers and \$210 to the Residents Coffers.

The Village Coffers which started out at \$200 was reduced to \$170 when monies were taken out for art supplies. Furthermore, we decided collectively to reduce a debt by \$100. Therefore, at the end of the week the delivery of \$90 to the Village Coffers brought its new total to \$160.

The Residents Coffers, pays out to all the participants eligible for income sharing. In this case 4 participants with each one receiving \$55.

(End of example)

Participants can put as many hours into the cooperatives or businesses as they choose but are not compensated in any extra way for doing so. We do not want to promote workaholic tendencies, and we are unaware at this time how we can merge this within the equal, money-less, sharing economy

without bringing in complications and problems that is inherent in the use of money and money systems. So for example, we do not want a dynamic to evolve where one participant is forcing others to work more because they work more. This is why in the IPC it is possible to work more but is not expected or rewarded economically. If someone loves what they do for work it may become common for them to do more. Some people in this case have suggested using an existing thank you site such as Honor Pay to show appreciation without the link to economics. In real life, appreciation may be shown in different more subtle ways.

We want participants to be free to engage in extra pecuniary income but we do not want them to do so at the expense of everything that the community has to offer, (for example, by choosing the hours that pay more for themselves), and therefore we have devised a way in which their extra effort can generate them an individual financial return, so long as they do at least their minimum amount of Shawoho hours. We will call this calculation; 'Working for cash Beyond Shawoho hours'.

The Working for Cash Beyond Shawoho calculation method is: Take the total dollar amount made from services rendered outside the community or for visitors (that is not part of the cooperative ventures) per month and divide it by the total hours of work done in that month (both the community hours and work for cash hours) and this will give us an average amount of monetary income per hour...then multiply that number by the amount of hours worked out of the community and this amount they can keep for themselves.

**Example 1, with 100 hours of Shawoho expected per 28 days:** A participant works his full 100 Shawoho hours for the month and also earned \$500 during a 25 hour period from some outside source. Note: if it was an inside source the monies would be divided in the cooperatives or businesses through the Share the Wealth Dividends so it can only happen from outside sources, be it other employers or some self employed good or service. To calculate in this case how much the participant keeps and how much goes to the Share the Dividends Plan we would take the total amount of monies earned in that month = \$500 and divide that by the total amount of hours worked in the month, which in this case would be 100 Shawoho hours and 25 outside hours for a total of 125 hours, which gives us a \$4 an hour average, which we then multiply by the outside hours. In this case  $25 \times \$4$  which equals \$100, which would be what the participant keeps for themselves. The remaining \$400 goes into the Share the Dividends Plan and a part of these monies will also come back to the participant when divvied up accordingly.

**Example 2, with 100 hours of Shawoho expected per 28 days:** A participant decides to come live in the IPC who telecommutes or makes money through a personal business they run, or perhaps work outside the land on a full time basis in a good paying job. Let us imagine that they earn \$20 an hour and prefer this job to others available in the community so they choose to work all their time in this. They work 160 hours that month (60 more than the required minimum Shawoho).  $\$20$  an hour multiplied by 160 hours = \$3,200. In this case, 100 hours goes to the community coffers (to be divvied up in the normal fashion) and 60 hours goes to the participant. Thus in this case, \$2000 to the community coffers and \$1200 in the participants pocket. In this way they are doing what they love and are helping the community in bringing the commodity of money and are still living in the shared economy and benefiting from all the services that the Tribe and land offers as well as still getting a part of the Share the Dividends Plan.

# Land Stewardship Model

- [Introduction to the IPC Land Stewardship Model](#)
- [Project, Cooperative, Business Stewardship](#)
- [Private Stewardship](#)
- [Steward Land Fee Information](#)
- [The Financial Cost of Initial Participation Chart](#)
- [Private Home Agreement](#)

## Introduction to the IPC Land Stewardship Model

The land the Tribe inhabits is under the protection of the International Permaculture Community S.A. which has its Land Trust Measures written in its bylaws that makes sure that the project continues without market speculation well into the future. These lands cannot be sold or broken into pieces for sale unless all Stewards(the Tribe) who live on and care for the lands decide otherwise unanimously. The Stewards have the right to live on the land in perpetuity so long as they abide by the rules of this contract.

All Participants take part in this stewardship and each person benefits from public as well as private spaces in the community. As a tribe we will manage the lands of the IPC S.A. with its various zoning types, and follow the guidelines of those types, laid out in the Permaculture Master Plan, without using an ownership model.

Land can be stewarded by a participants (private spaces) and also by projects or cooperatives (public spaces), within the zones permissible. In essence the Corporation & the Tribe give these entities the right to use land for an indefinite period of time so long as they occupy the lots offered and that they do so in accordance to the IPC Ecological Charter. Stewardship imparts responsibility as well as privileges to each Participant.

There will be a Steward Registry to keep track of all history concerning the use of lands and the Stewards of land.

All Stewards are responsible for the upkeep of their stewarded lot which entails respecting neighboring lands, controlling fires, keeping grounds relatively clean from industrial societal garbage and not polluting the water, air or soil with same. For a more detailed explanation please see the IPC Ecological Charter document.

## Project, Cooperative, Business Stewardship

There is no Steward Land Fee for a project or cooperative. The size of land stewarded is based on the project or cooperatives needs and will be granted or denied by the community using the



democratic model. A project or cooperative cannot transfer their stewardship and if they no longer need the land or if the cooperative or project no longer is functioning the land returns to the commons - to the community/IPC Tribe.

## **Private Stewardship**

The privilege of private stewardship allows each Participant access to a personal/private space within the greater community spaces. The freedom to use this land in any manner so long as it is in accordance with the IPC Ecological Charter, imparts a personal liberty, allowing Stewards to live and explore in their own ways where the community as a whole or in groups may not be interested in exploring collectively.

Once a Tribe Member, Part time Member or Vacation Investor has paid their Steward Land Fee they may choose what ever private lot from those that are available in the Eco-village zone. A lot with prior buildings may have additional fees in order to use, usually payable to the person who Stewarded prior or to the Community directly depending on the situation.

Being a participant and a steward of such a lot does not mean that one cannot choose alternative living arrangements. Each participant, regardless of if they are co-housing with others (children, other participant(s), etc...), can enter into stewardship of such personal land. Each fully participating tribe member can choose to steward (take care of) a private lot and if they so choose can build on, live on, plant on, keep up, make messy or do with as they please so long as what is done on it does not run contrary to the IPC Contract or the IPC Ecological Charter. Furthermore, a steward is not obliged to live or even use the land that they are a steward of, they can allow other members or the community at large use it for various purposes. It is a privilege that one has as a participant and it is a show of equal standing, of individual expression and power within the community.

The one time cost associated with Stewardship (first time only) is referred to most often as the [Steward Land Fee](#). Under some circumstances this fee may have a refundable portion. See the Steward Land Fee Information section below for more details.

Each private stewarded lot will be equal in size and will have enough room for a modest home and garden. The exact size of the stewarded land will be chosen when finalizing the permaculture plan and its size will help be determined by the needs and wants of future participants. At this time, lots of 760 square meters are planned and will most likely remain unless opposition or circumstances in the permaculture plan deem otherwise to re-evaluate.

Children, teenagers and other dependents of Participants have the right to stay on the Stewarded Land and in the community at no extra charge until their independence, after which they will be considered as Family Visitors unless they have already applied for membership. (See Family and Friend Visitors in the Other Social Agreements Section of this contract for details). Such dependents and all dependents can choose to apply for Stewardship and have access to a Steward Lot with the same Steward Land Fee price as their parent(s) paid (as individuals) when they wish to join as adult tribe members and be responsible for their Shawoho. This is true for those dependents that leave the community for school, travel or work abroad and return one day to live again here.

Stewards can invite outside guests onto their Stewarded land and if they do, are responsible for them. Stewards are given 30 Guest Days per year for their guests to use without charge. This is a non transferable nor bankable time which can be used consecutively or not, beginning on the 1st day of each year. This is counted not by the amount of people visiting but by the days that a guest or guests are on the land. (See [Family and Friend Visitors in the Other Social Agreements Section](#) of this contract for details)

A Steward can choose to temporarily or indefinitely allow the land to be used for other community endeavors, however the steward on the registry will remain the same until they leave the community or transfer their stewardship to another lot. In affect, each adult/independent Tribe member should be a Steward of a lot at any given time.

A business can be started on a private steward lot, community backed or not, however all the rules still apply. What is created from that business must first be offered to the Tribe and what is left can then be sold - please refer to the [Income Sharing Model](#) in our Sharing Economy section of the IPC contract for details.

Each Participant can only be a Steward of one lot at any given time. Projects, businesses and cooperatives may Steward multiple communal or private lots so long as the community has given consent and those entities are actually using them.

Stewarded lands are chosen on a first come, first choice method. There is no difference in fees nor in costs based on the sites themselves. Differences depend only on when a member joins the community (thus the more communal infrastructure and processes already existing - the more expensive) and the cost of buildings that prior persons or the community have invested on that lot.

Each stewarded land is 760 square meters and is usually located in the periphery of the village center and outward, along root like pathways. We feel this is an adequate size to offer privacy for each participant while keeping the village size reasonably (contained) and in proximity for communal living and cooperative work. Exceptions may arise and could be granted through the democratic model if a majority is agreed to.

As of this time, there is no building code, so we ask participants to be safe and create their place as they wish so long as they abide by the Ecological Charter. We recommend sharing your vision of place as helpful information is surely to come your way in saving time, effort and money. Having plans looked over by others who have building, architecture or engineering experience will ensure that each building will endure and be structurally sound.

A participant can transfer their stewarded land to any other participant or person, in the singular, if they are planning to leave the community, exchange a stewarded lot for another, or in the form of an executed will. In order for the new person to become the new steward they will need to already be a participant or go through the membership process and be accepted into the tribe. Such a person will have a one year grace period to come to the community to begin their trial period. They may stay and maintain the Stewarded lot in good standing as an interim Steward once they have begun their trial period process. In either case, after a month of the transfer and until the year grace period passes, the community will be able to use the land, for example, in harvesting fruits, in short term rentals, etc... as long as such undertakings do not change the lay of the land or buildings there upon.

If the next of kin (or person to be transferred to) are not interested in coming to live in the community or if they don't come to the community within the year the Steward lot will be available again for a new Steward (new members or old members wanting to switch lots). There is no refund of the Steward Land Fee unless otherwise stipulated in this agreement.

If a participant resigns from the community and there is no other participant who wants to take on the stewardship available, the community will find a replacement for them in time, and will reimburse certain monies (See buildings), calculated from the date of departure, when the community is able to do so, usually once a replacement member has paid their Steward Land Fee and the buildings costs to the old steward.

Selling a stewardship is forbidden. The only money exchanged is the Steward Land Fee and it is exchanged with the Community Coffer not directly between individuals. Every new member must pay the membership fees but if they have been given the stewarded land by a friend or family member through circumstances such as leaving the community or by will, the new member would only have to pay the \$1200 trial period fee and be accepted into the community, if they have not already done so, before legally becoming the Steward of that lot. If the sibling already is stewarding land, they will have the first opportunity to change lots. There will be a 3 month grace period for the sibling to make that choice. Which ever stewarded land they do not take on will be available again for other members or new participants coming into the community. As the Steward Land Fee is a way of paying off the original purchase price there will be no raising of the price when transferring. However, if someone paid the 'early bird' price of the Steward Land Fee and transferred to another lot in which that Steward who joined the community later paid the 'maximum' price of the Steward Land Fee, no monies would need be exchanged.

The Steward Land Fee is refundable in part only during the first year after the Trial Period has been complete, if for any reason the new Tribe member(s) decides to change their mind(s) and leave the community. The amount of the refund is the Steward Land Fee paid at the time, divided by 12 then multiplied by the amount of months remaining of their first year. This is also transferable to the next of kin or whom the member decides the IPC Tribe gives it to.

Stewards can rent out their home if they so wish when leaving for short periods or otherwise and can either offset their 30 visitor days and keep the income or they can keep the visitor hours for other times and share the income. Beyond the 30 day offset per year, renting out their home or spaces would be considered a business and monies thereof would go to the Share the Dividends Plan.

If members are leaving the community temporarily, that is, with the intention of returning to live in the community later, there are a few different possibilities of what will be done with the Steward Land while away and these are determined by the amount of time and frequency that participants are planning to be gone.

- For departures over 30 days the community must be informed by the participant at a monthly meeting and/or posted on the bulletin board.
- For departures of under 90 days a stewarded land can be left abandoned.
- For departures of over 90 days, the community may ask to use the stewarded land or house to rent out or use for other projects until a week before the participants scheduled return. If

this happens, please be ready to remove all important personal items to place in storage. This space could be a locked room in the same house, or in a locked shed or any where else you may wish to store things securely as visitors may be using your personal spaces while you are gone.

If members do not return, or do not communicate with us after the period of their intended return, the community will be worried...so please let us know of your plans! If there is no contact after a 90 day period from the intended return date, the tribe will assume that the person is no longer coming back and will make the land available to the rest of the community and future members. Personal items will be respected as much as possible and kept in a storage space. If the participant does eventually return and there is still space available in the community they can choose another land to Steward. If they have been gone for a long period of time (many years), they may need to be re-accepted into the community through a trial period without the fees.

A Steward cannot sell their stewardship in part or in full. A Steward may transfer their Stewardship through the Steward Registrar to a new participant or an existing participant. The price of Stewarded Land will never be more than \$8,800 USD in perpetuity, meaning that as time goes by, the worth of the land, actually decreases as inflation rises. Another possibility is that when the community is strong financially we may choose to end the fees altogether, thus no one would ever have to transfer stewarded land with fees again. Either way, eventually, if for unfortunate reasons we as a human race are still using the price system model of economics, the full price of a stewarded lot will be available to even the poorest of folk (financially speaking).

## Steward Land Fee Information

The Steward Land Fee varies according to how soon one joins the community. This system is in place to give an incentive to those who come sooner as the workload will be greater and less comfortable in the earlier years. These fees break down as:

- For the first 16 participants the cost of stewarded land is \$3800
- Between participant 17 & 30 the cost of stewarded land is \$4800
- Between participant 31 & 50 the cost of stewarded land is \$6800
- After 50 participants the cost of the stewarded land increases to and stabilizes at \$8800 USD.

We prefer if the stewarded land fee is paid in full however we understand that not all persons are capable of this and accept monthly payments as well. Contact us and we will discuss the possibilities with you.

**The Financial Cost of Initial Participation Chart (in USD)**

Consecutive New Participants	Trial Period Rental Fee (\$200 x 6 months)	Steward Land Fee	Total Initial Participation Costs
First 16 participants	1200	3800	5000

(Pioneers)			
New Participants 17 to 30	1200	4800	6000
New Participants 31 to 50	1200	6800	8000
New Participants 51 to 200 plus	1200	8800	10,000

The appropriate fee for the stewarded land depends on when a person finishes their 6 month trial period and not upon arrival to the community, nor upon a payment or down-payment of the Trial Period Fee. The stewarded land fee is based on the consecutive number of new Participants who have joined the Tribe and not the total number of participants who at the IPC at any given point, or living in the community, meaning that if the current participant population was 30 and one of the original pioneers who paid \$3800 leaves, thus making the participant population 29, the next new participant who joins the community would be counted as the 31st member to join and thus would end up paying \$8000 in initial costs. (See Chart)

### **Private Home Agreement**

The International Permaculture Community is unique in that a steward can build a personal abode, home, tree house, garden etc... on a piece of land that is for most intents and purposes private space. These improvements are owned by the steward.

Stewards are expected to pay with their own monies to build their own homes. Maintenance of the stewarded land in general, the maintenance of buildings and the building of structures on this lot is the responsibility of the Steward. The expenses of each are also of the Steward to deal with unless a structure is being built or maintained for community use - as in for a place of business, in which case expenses may be a communal affair.

Stewards should register their building expenses with the village accountant. These records are kept for future claims to the worth of the buildings. We suggest that sharing the intended purchases (or in the case of businesses - approval of intended purchases) with the Tribe, before construction begins, will help the community as a whole understand a particular participants overall needs and perhaps alternatives too or better prices for materials may be collectively found. If materials are available from the land, these may be forth coming, so long as it does not retract from the sustainability of our lands and does not disturb other already established participants, projects or cooperatives from doing so. All such issues are brought up in our meetings using the democratic model for deliberation. It may be in the community's best interest to keep such building materials if finite, for future communal buildings.

It may happen that some materials will not be approved and these will be decided through the democratic process. Such materials may be declined due to environmental issues while others may be due to the community not willing to take on future claims for it. In the case of the latter, the steward can still purchase and use the material but the expense will not be validated as a claimable

expense. This is why it is better to submit at least in rough the materials and estimates to the community before building a private dwelling.

The registration of expenses will be kept by the community and can be used in the eventual transfer of a Steward Land so that monies invested by the Steward can be partially refunded. Registration of expenses is only possible with the construction of new buildings or for large renovations. Maintenance expenses are not covered here.

The sale price then is a fixed price. Non negotiable for a higher price. Buildings will be appraised by a protocol (See below) which will include some form of recompense for buildings in good condition, with material expenses and perhaps some labor costs covered where Shawoho was not possible. We have decided this tactic to be fair to those who have built something with value without playing into the speculation game. The standard protocol at the time of this update is the total cost minus depreciation of 5% per year until half cost (after year 10) and stay there after at half cost in the building is still safe, habitable and intact.

The sale of a building is done between the new Steward to the old Steward through the Steward Registrar. One cannot sell a home or building to someone other than a recognized Steward of the IPC.

As a community, we may choose to create a partial repayment protocol for bought materials because when new members coming in, who want the Steward Land, may not want the building that was built upon it or pay a high price for that building. This leaves us in a situation where either they have to choose another land and the community waits till someone does want it, or the community itself pays for the building directly and uses the Land for communal purposes. We as a community will have to discuss this matter further as the community develops.

As housing is a need, the Shawoho (Shared Work Hours) count toward those engaged in helping the Steward build their home. However, due to the fact that the Steward is building a house for their own benefit and in their own manner we have decided that time used in building personal infrastructure will only be counted as 1/2 time. That is, if a Steward put in 40 hours into building his home that week, it would only count as 20 hours of Shawoho. Note that this is true for any other participant who may be sharing the living space with them. Any participant who will not be benefiting from the structure personally (not their own home etc...) can count each hour in full toward their Shawoho commitment.

## Other Social Agreements

- [Spirituality and Open-Faith Community](#)
- [Conflict Resolution](#)
- [Sharing Circles](#)
- [Generational Balance](#)
- [Children](#)
- [Schooling & unschooling](#)
- [Community Meals](#)
- [Relationships and Sexuality](#)
- [Nudity](#)
- [Personal Items](#)
- [Interaction with Local Communities](#)
- [Friends and Family Visitors](#)
- [Temporary Absences from the Community](#)
- [Substance Use](#)
- [Inappropriate Behavior and Grounds for Dismissal](#)
- [Leaving the Community](#)

### **Spirituality and Open-Faith Community**

There is no one particular religion or spirituality of the community. We adopt an attitude of acceptance and openness and this is what we look for in others who intend to join, whether or not they honor any of the manifestations of Spirit. A common recognition that ties us together is that we are all diverse, important and interconnected.

In general we hold a deep respect for the earth as a vibrantly living force and see ourselves connected to the web of what we call nature and what we call life. Living on the land, we take honor in being guided by the elements and the natural world and use that to walk on this land with care.

People may wish to have celebrations, community rituals, meditations, prayers... and each tribe member is welcome to participate or not in what feels right for them.

### **Conflict Resolution**

The backbone of maintaining a harmonious community lies in nourishing healthy relationships with each other and the environment. Through open and conscious communication we are able to express our needs, desires, fears and boundaries, helping us to be clear with ourselves and others. By listening to others we broaden our perspectives and allow ourselves to hear and feel the other. The Sharing Circle is one system in place to help us express and listen. If tensions, conflicts or

misunderstandings come up, the sooner they are talked about the better. We feel the Twin Oaks community states it best by saying "It isn't the existence of conflict that determines the health of a group, but rather the manner in which a group does or doesn't deal with conflict which determines it's health". We make a commitment to speaking up and doing so with conscious delivery. By taking responsibility for our own behaviors and emotions, and by understanding that every story holds multiple perspectives, we contribute greatly to the resolution of conflict.

Understandably, emotions can get triggered and our ability to hear the other or express ourselves in a healthy way may sometimes need assistance. If there is a conflict that cannot be resolved between the individuals or group, the assistance of a mediator will be called upon. We hope to have several people in the community who can take on the role as mediators which people can seek council with and begin a mediation process. A good mediator is an empathic listener, who hears what both parties have to say, helps define the needs of each and guides them to find their own solutions to meet those needs. Anyone with deep listening and strong interpersonal skills as well as clear personal boundaries is welcome to be trained in the mediation process, which would then make them another available mediator to choose from. The mediator (or mediators) will meet with both parties together and if need be separately to assist in finding a solution. If this is a matter that affects the entire community and calls for a decision to be made, it will be brought to the democratic model. If the mediation does not lead to a resolution the issue may be brought to the democratic model as well. Any conflict not being addressed may be brought up by any member of the community as a request for mediation between the individuals involved.

## **Sharing Circles**

The Sharing Circles are community gatherings where people are invited to speak from their hearts and share what is alive for them, a chance to simply be heard by the group without any debate, defense or attack. This is not a time to try to resolve a conflict or decide on plans. Tensions that arise may be diffused through this process as we listen to each other and hear what the other is experiencing. Nor is this a space for berating, accusing or philosophizing. This is a space for sharing how you feel in general or regarding a particular event and sharing personal challenges as well as accomplishments and joy! Done in a pop-up style where people step up to speak when and if they feel moved, while the rest of the group holds them in a safe space and listens. This is a simple yet profound gathering that helps promote freedom of expression while contributing to community cohesion.

## **Generational Balance**

The founders believe that a well rounded community should include a variety of ages, from babies to the most elderly. We appreciate the dynamics, the patience, the humbling, the beauty it breathes into a group. As such we are interested in all types of ages and include different ways in which all ages are able to participate and enjoy life together. We value the elderly for their experiences, stories and wisdom and celebrate the joy of young ones engrossed in the discovery of the world around them. We also understand that the young lack the knowledge and capacity while the elderly often lack the energy and strength. As such we have some special privileges for each group.

- [Baby Credit](#)



- [Young Child Privilege](#)
- [Senior/Elderly Participants](#)

### **Baby Credit:**

The parents of a baby get a credit of one year of Shawoho (Shared Work Hours) to divide up as they choose to, in monthly segments and it can be used from three months prior to the expected birth to maximum one year after the birth. For example Georgia takes 2 month credit before the birth and 1 after the birth. Ivan and Georgia both take a month credit each for the next 3 months. This leaves them with 3 months left. Georgia is breast feeding so they decide she take the remainder 3 months which means the credit will be exhausted by the 8th month.

### **Young Child Privilege:**

Parents with young children, from ages 6 months to 5 years, who are taking care of the child as a primary caregiver (house chores, being with the children, feeding them, etc...) are eligible for this privilege which reduces by half their Shawoho commitment. It does not matter how many children a primary giver is taking care of, there is only one privilege of half time hours given during the period per family. The amount of the half time hours is established each month as Shawoho can change over such a large period of time.

The example continues: Georgia takes her last Baby Credit in the 7th month and begins the Young Child Privilege. She takes on her 1/2 time Shawoho hours on tasks in the community which will be easy to do with a child nearby, sleeping or being watched. The grandparents or Ivan take care of the baby otherwise to help her out. In year 2, Georgia decides to go for a trip out of the country for a month and Ivan takes care of the child. He then receives the Young Child Privilege for that month. (It could have been any guardian, grandparent etc...). Georgia gives birth again a few months after returning. Georgia and Ivan stop using the Young Child Privilege and use the Baby Credit for the next 6 months. After this period Georgia then uses the Young Child Privilege again, which would half her Shawoho hours. Even though they now have 2 children only one parent is still receiving the credit for the whole. The credit can be shared in the family.

Parents cannot use both the Young Child Credit and the Baby Credit at the same time, nor can they change the dates to compensate for any overlap.

### **Senior/Elderly Participants:**

Participants who are 65 years and older have a choice as to how much engagement in the work of the community they do and benefit accordingly or compensate accordingly by these.

If they choose not to take on Shawoho at all they are expected to pay the community coffers 60% of the amount they receive per month from whatever pension they have coming to them from outside sources, no matter how little or large that may be. In this case, no work is expected from them. Also in this scenario, they would not be entitled to receive any Share the Wealth dividends directly, however indirectly they obviously would - that is through what is spent from the Village Cooffers and benefit from infrastructure improvements, events, projects etc... and they still would be

receiving shared resources, that is all the goods and services that IPC participants offer to the tribe, including the abundance of food produced.

If they choose to engage in Shawoho they will be eligible for the 'Share the Wealth Dividends' calculated from the amount of time they worked. To see more details and calculations for the elderly or disabled please read the [Work Sharing Agreement Section](#) of our Economy page (near the end of that section or search for elderly with ctrl f).

In however they engage, the elderly are still considered participants, they would still need to be responsible as members in other ways.

If entering the community as a senior, the person would still need to pay their membership costs (Trial Fee & Steward Land Fee) and would still have to go through the process of membership.

It has been suggested that as a collective we pay into the Panamanian, private or internal type of Old Age Security. This may be a possibility but will be brought up and dealt with once the community is up and running, as the participants will want to make those choices through our democratic model and many voices will need to be heard.

## **Children**

The IPC is a family friendly environment and the Tribe recognizes that the energy and wisdom of all ages contributes greatly to a well rounded healthy community.

Children are valued as creative, intuitive individuals that have just as much to teach us as learn from us. The community helps raise the children and we are raised by the children. By living in community, the children receive many perspectives, models, people to share with and reflect on as they test, explore, and question, the community grows and learns as well. The parents or primary caregivers will be responsible for ensuring daily care of the child, however it is also the responsibility of all members to keep an eye out for the safety of the children, respond to any immediate danger and provide or find the necessary support for the child. The community in that way supports the autonomy as well as the safety of the children.

Parenting support is important and we hope the Tribe will undertake activities that will accomplish this. Such activities could include a sharing circle for parents, workshops for both children and parents, a sharing of the responsibilities among parents of different families and even a designated child care provider, and many more that may be useful.

Just like the adults, children will be encouraged to take care of their environment by picking up after themselves and treating the natural environment with care. Any destructive behavior could be positively redirected by the adults of the community without need to punish or chastise. The parents are asked to help their children respect community guidelines concerning land, material care and respecting boundaries.

As much as possible we want children to grow in an environment where they feel loved, their voices are heard and their emotions, thoughts, needs, desires and curiosities are valued. They too may be involved in the decision making process by having a say on issues that feel relevant to them. However, the ability to cast votes will only be granted once an adolescent is participating fully in the shared work.

Teenagers may decide to participate in Shawoho, experimenting with what kinds of work and what schedule works best for them, and pending on the communities decision, may begin receiving some of the share the wealth dividends for part time shared work hours.

A child or adolescent will be welcomed into sharing circles and other events or activities. They may stay in meetings or other gatherings as long as they are not disrupting the process and if they do, they will be asked to leave (same applies to adults!) and may return at a later time if they feel ready to.

A child who grows up in the community does not have to do a trial period or pay the Trial Period Fee. A child of a member that comes to the community as an adult (over the age of 18), unless they were a prior member and lived at least a year in the community, has to do the Trial Period and pay the Trial Period Fee. Any child, growing up in the community or not, who comes to the community and joins as a Tribe member will pay the same amount of Steward Land Fee as their parent(s) had.

We hope to create a safe, inspiring, and enriching environment for both children and families to play, explore, live and flourish together.

## **Schooling and Unschooling**

There is no mandatory schooling system within the Tribe. Parents and children are free to choose whatever form of education best suits them including options of personalized homeschooling programs, unschooling, attending the local schools in the nearest village or even starting up a school on the land.

## **Community Meals**

People will most often organize their own food and eating schedule within their own personal dwellings. There will be a community kitchen to use, with its own rules and orientations. The core team is hoping to meet to eat communally at least once a week. At the moment members take turns for the nightly Community Meal at basecamp. Head chefs will alternate. Depending on the needs of the community we may decide to eat together more or less frequently. This is not a mandatory gathering but hopefully a beautiful place to share in the joy of culinary delights.

There is no specific diet followed in the community and people may eat what feels right for their bodies. Eating styles may range from omnivores, vegetarians, vegans and living food eaters. Community meals will be organized to try to offer meals that will fit all our diets. Respecting 'clean space' per type of foodie will also be forefront in a community style kitchen.

## **Relationships and Sexuality**

A myriad of intimate relationship styles exist in the world and the IPC accepts all expressions, whether monogamous, open, single, celibate, poly-amorous or other. Part of every adult individual having a personal stewarded lot is to allow for freedom and personal space. For instance, a couple may decide to live together and have an additional space if one of them needs time to themselves, or others may choose to live separately and choose when they spend time together... People are free to

live their relationships in whatever dynamic works for them, without judgment from the community.

Sex is a natural and beautiful part of life! Unfortunately there is much taboo and unhealthy expressions of sexual energy in much of the world and the IPC hopes to inspire healthy sexual relationships and consciousness around the subject. The community is a sex positive space where people are open to discuss their fears, desires and boundaries and where children, and especially adolescents are welcome to join in on the discussions. Tantra workshops are one way in which those interested in the community can gather together to bring playfulness to these discussions, offer transparency and offer a model of healthy and sacred sexuality. There are bound to be different levels of comfort with displays of sexuality or sexual energy and through communication we will find ways of encouraging expression while respecting boundaries. Any sexual behavior that inflicts harm on another or crosses a boundary of another will be brought immediately to mediation and possibly the democratic model to decide on the best course of action.

## **Nudity**

Our gorgeous human bodies have the choice to be free of clothes. Because we view the human body as our blessed vessels nudity is accepted and embraced as a natural right on community lands. To remain in a friendly open relationship with locals we ask that people refrain from being naked on the public access road and near our neighboring local families. As well, for safety or hygienic purposes there are certain locations on the land where clothing will be required such as in the community kitchen and in workshop spaces. Any invasive or other inappropriate behavior related to the nudity will be stopped immediately and brought to mediation or discussed in the democratic model.

## **Personal Items**

Participants can own and use personal items as easily as they borrow and use communal items and both can be found interchangeably under their roofs. One is a 'good' which the owner is not willing to share as it is too precious to them such as a beautifully crafted cane or it may be an item that is not even sharable such as a kitchen table, and the other is a 'good' that is sharable and was either made via Shawoho hours, purchased via the village coffer or donated by a participant or outsider to the community. Even if something could be shared and was made in Shawoho hours does not mean it can not be held as a personal item in private spaces, for example commodities that are used up such as candles, soap, conserves or even a dining room set. The most important rule is that if a product is manifested out of Shawoho hours then it should not be sold unless the community has decided to do so and the Tribe shares in the profits of its sale, that is, monies go to the village coffer and are redistributed in the normal fashion from there.

No matter what the case, materials, tools and goods should be respected and well maintained. Such basics as - 'put it back where you found it', 'tell someone if you have broke it', 'repair it if you can', 'prepare it for the next person who wants to use it', etc... are expected from all people who visit or live on the land.

Personal items should for the most part be kept on a participants stewarded land when not in use. This will help set the boundary for such items. Most communal items will be found and stored in communal spaces. See [Resource Sharing Model](#) in the Shared Economy section for details about communal goods.

## **Interaction with Local Communities**

We aim to maintain a strong and healthy relationship with the outer community. Integration is key to building a sense of trust and camaraderie with the local community so that those living on the land are not forever seen as outsiders and so that our neighbors equally feel non threatened by our presence. We adopt a philosophy that we both have much to learn from each other, avoiding the colonial mentality of subjugation or superiority. With that respect we try not to engage in hiring of locals but more integrating their services with our needs and of course offering them the possibility of membership.

Making connection with local neighbors with the hopes of emphasizing communication and comraderie, to accept differences, and who genuinely understand that we are all a human family. Once the community is more established, we may start up some community outreach projects such as gardening in schools or a much needed recycling program island wide.

Bocas has lots to offer too which is a blessing when starting out as there are services dotted around the island which will serve our interim needs especially in terms of health and activities. There are some alternative health practitioners around, many good food spots, local community initiatives and of course all the ocean activities we can dream of. This is the outer community which will support and give support while we grow strong as an eco-village on this island.

## **Friends and Family Visitors**

We value nurturing relationships with loved ones living afar and therefore aim to make this a welcoming visiting space for family and friends of Participants. Invited family and friends of existing participants may or may not need to contribute funds to the community depending on a Stewards remaining Guest Day count. These friends and family can furthermore join the community meals and restaurants for the fees which Tribe Members pay. Most other services are at guest prices. Stewards can house friends and family for up to a month per year without issue (Guest day count is currently at 30 days).

If non resident adults are invited by the Steward to stay on a stewarded land and a hosts Guest Days have already been used up, one of the following options will apply:

- Pay a daily service fee of \$6 for each adult visitor to the community (children and teenagers of the guests are exempt). This applies if they are staying in the dwelling of the Participant who invited them.
- Rent a bungalow or camping space from the community
- Engage in work exchange
- Apply to join the community as a member

The daily service fee covers the basic use of electricity, water, toilet paper, communal space use, etc.. but does not include food. Family and friends staying with participants should provide their

own food. The hosting participants should be aware of this when they are taking food from the communal food stocks. Alternatively, a donation could be made for any extra supplies or extra foods they need if we have them on hand.

## **Temporary Absences from the Community**

Participants leaving the community for a temporary period will have their benefits and Share the Wealth Dividends stopped upon leaving and resume upon return. There is no minimum stay required per year, however since we want a vibrant community, those who end up never being around (only one or two months per year) may be asked to divest their membership to make space for those whom would invest and enjoy their time being in the IPC on a more regular basis. Exceptions are possible depending on circumstances and would need to be discussed with the community through our regular decision making processes. Please see [Steward Land Model](#) for more information about absences.

## **Substance Use**

Hard drugs (such as cocaine, heroin, crystal meth etc..) are strictly forbidden in the community and use of other substances is tolerated on peoples stewarded lands but not tolerated in communally areas, including the village, the forest and farm lands. If there is any substance use on peoples stewarded lands, they must be mindful of keeping the land clean (such as putting cigarette butts in the garbage).

Please be aware that there is a tobacco virus that can spread from cigarettes and can affect plants. Therefore we ask smokers to be especially careful and wash their hands and shoes before going into agricultural areas.

If there is use of any drugs, alcohol or mind-altering substances that seem to be impeding in one's functioning or is inducing destructive behavior (to the group or to the individual), the subject will be brought to mediation and if not resolved, to the democratic model.

There may be times when groups of community members decide to use tobacco, alcohol or mind altering substances ceremoniously or festively, and ask for permission from the Tribe to do it in certain community spaces however that must always be discussed and decided upon before hand.

## **Inappropriate Behavior and Grounds for Dismissal**

Hopefully through the mediation process, healing services, counseling and/or group processing, people will have systems in place to help them work through challenging patterns and recondition. We recognize that no person is perfect and yet are at the same time. What is more important is a genuine desire for personal growth, an ability to self reflect and use triggers, challenges, and old conditioning as a platform for transformation. Ultimately though we are responsible for our own emotional and physical well being, as well as our actions and ways we treat the environment and each other. These are some of the things that may lead to dismissal.

1. Polluting the air, water or soil knowingly or through gross negligence.
2. Non-consensual physical, sexual or verbal abuse

3. Mistreating animals
4. Misusing drugs, alcohol or other mind altering substances
5. Not keeping up your responsibility of Shawoho (Shared Work Hours)
6. Lying about hours worked or income generated
7. Selling of our communal goods and services for personal private gain
8. Being repeatedly irresponsible to community resources
9. Repeated crossing or breaking of boundaries.

All such matters will be immediately brought to the democratic model.

## **Leaving the community**

Leaving the IPC is possible at any time. When Shawoho stops - so to do the privileges of the community member. A person who wants to leave the community or is being forced out due to unresolvable conflicts will have a grace period of 30 days to pack up and leave without having to pay or do Shawoho. Note that it is almost a consensus affair and is an unlikely scenario. After this 30 day grace period, the community will charge a rental fee, which will be decided at the following meeting after knowledge of intention to leave has been made.

If someone needs to leave suddenly and knowing they will not be back but unable to deal with their place and stuffs, the community will store and keep safe as much of the personal goods that it can and make the lot available for a new stewardship beginning 1 month after the leaving participant stops their responsibilities. Storing such goods may come with a fee, however this will be discussed at a future time.

If there were improvements made upon the land, for example a livable house on the stewarded lot, the leaving participant will be reimbursed for part of the buildings original costs. Normally, a new participant would purchase the improvements on the lot they are taking stewardship of however this also means that the leaving participant may not be able to recuperate their funds until such a new participant is forth coming and accepted into the IPC. In some cases, if the community decides it has the financial resources to buy the building from the leaving member it may do so and the space will either be used as a rental house for visitors, temporary housing for work exchangers, new comers and persons building their houses, or to fill any other need the community may have. For details about such arrangements please read through the Economy and Steward Land sections of this Membership Contract.

Except for in the case of a tribe members first year of participation, after their Trial Period is over, Steward Land Fees are not refundable in part or in whole.

# Tribe Membership Process

- [Application Stage](#)
- [Try Out Stage](#)
- [Full Membership](#)

## Application Stage

The following outlines the application process and is open to any person who is interested in exploring this option. There is no specific order to the steps however all the steps will have to be done before your work will be accepted as a Try Out Participant. There are no fees to apply. You can apply before or after coming to the IPC - we accept Wwoofers, Workaways, exchanges in kind and other arrangements too so this could also be another way to check out the community and land, however we suggest you understand how we intend to function before coming. Also note that applying while on the land means that your time for Try Out won't begin till you have applied and been approved which on our end could take up to a month.

- 1. Fill out the [Intentional Living Questionnaire](#) & then send it to us. If you are a group, a couple or a family we ask to receive a questionnaire from each individual adult. This questionnaire acts also as a self reflection tool and clarifies ones desire and position on issues that relate to our community directly.
- 2. Read the Membership Contract (found under the membership tab or download the [IPC Membership Contract PDF](#)).
- 3. Once Community Earth receives the questionnaire we will give you a confirmation that we received it. Please wait 1 week before expecting further news from us. When we have finished reviewing the questionnaire we will arrange an interview by phone or VOIP with video (Skype, Jitsi, Google, etc...). If you are already on the land as a visitor or in a work exchange role we will meet with you in person.

This screening process is more about getting to know you better and we will ask questions that may arise to clarify information in the questionnaire.

While the Tribe aims to be as inclusive as possible we also strive to maintain the harmony and health of the community as it grows. As such, you will be asked to undertake a criminal record check from your country of origin, which you can fax us after the interview. We suggest that if you have a criminal record, that you discuss it with us in the interview. The founders feel that many modern convictions are political in nature due to the system of economics or governments we live under and are quite accepting, however the Tribe as a whole reserves the right to choose who lives amongst us.



No confirmation of membership will be given at the end of this interview.

- 5. It could take us another week before we approve or disapprove of your request to begin a Try Out (Trial) Participant period (see below for details), but we will contact you in either case with details. In the spirit of transparency, we will let you know why your application was either approved or disapproved. If you are approved through the application process you and your dependents can start the 6 month trial period as soon as space is available. This period only begins once our Membership Contract is signed and the applicant is working and living on the land.

## **Try Out Participation Stage**

You are now welcomed into the community as a Trial Participant which will last a period of 6 months of actual time spent living in the community. This time does not have to be consecutive but it is probably best to do so. For example, 3 months on, 3 months off then 3 months on again would be okay. If you don't think you can do the Try Out Period at one full stretch please let the Tribe know this before you come.

During this try out period, members are expected to take on most of the responsibilities of the Tribe and we will help you get up to speed within the first month as to how things operate. Newcomers participate in projects and cooperatives, assist meetings, share in the profits and receive all the benefits the community has to offer, with the exception of the right to cast votes on issues under discussion. This trial period allows new comers to find their niche, to integrate with the others and see if they enjoy living together in the eco-village.

As a Trial Participant you will be given temporary housing. This housing could be in the form of a room in someones existing house, a fully equipped camp ground, a cabana or other small dwelling etc... and will be determined before you arrive taking into consideration your needs, what is available and when you are planning to come.

Trial members will be expected to pay a form of rent - 'the Trial Period Fee' which is set at \$200 USD per month. These monies will go toward their membership fees. This ensures that after 6 months the full Try Out Period Fee has been covered.

This Try Out Period will probably be the hardest for those unfamiliar with living in such a community, in natural tropical settings, with a free and open mindset and we suggest that you take this period to evolve personally and communally when issues arise, and it is in all our interests to help you do so.

We ask that you give the experience a try for at least one month. If for some reason, you are unable to stay the whole 6 months, but wish to continue the trial period, please inform the community formally at a monthly community meeting of your departure and your intended date of return. The remainder of your trial period will commence upon your return.

Once the Try Out Period begins, Participants will be responsible for their shared work hours (Shawoho), of expressing their needs and engaging in the direct democracy process (except the

power to cast votes). They will be included in the monthly financial 'share the wealth' dividends, which will be calculated retroactively 30 days after they begin working in the Shared Economy.

Once the trial period is over the community will gather together through the democratic model to decide whether or not you are accepted into our family. Trial period Participants will be told why they were accepted or rejected. If not accepted, you will be asked to leave and will be given a week to do so. If people are truly themselves this will work out for the best for everyone involved.

## **Full Membership**

You are considered a full Member/Participant when:

- Community Earth Foundation has received payment for your [Trial Period Rental Fee](#);
- You have completed your Try Out Period participation time of six months and have been formally excepted into the community.
- Community Earth Foundation has received payment for your appropriate [Steward Land Fee](#) in full;

At that point we celebrate your birth into the Tribe!

A participant can be granted Stewardship of Land if and when all prior Tribe members formally agree to grant it without an up front payment to the Steward Land Fee. Infact, those participating in Shawolo are able to pay off their Steward Land Fee over time if the community accepts this. Until that time and until at least 6 months of participation at the IPC is given through Shawoho, a person can be involved in the democratic processes but not have a vote.

Note: There are no fees required for children (17 and under). When a child who is living in the community becomes an adult, they too must apply for membership and fill in the questionnaire. This is a good moment for them to reflect on what community living means to them and if this is a place they wish to continue living. They too will go through a trial period and pay the fees for this and Steward Land. If an adolescent under the age of 18 chooses to partake in the shared work load hours and does so for 6 months this time can count toward their Trial Period. Note that doing so also entitles them to begin receiving the monthly Share the Wealth Dividends. Like everyone else, once they are recognized as adult Participants they too will be offered land to steward and can begin casting votes.

# **IPC Membership Contract Agreement Signature Page**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read, understood and accept the IPC Membership Contract and I understand it is a binding contract and voluntarily commit to the processes and responsibilities that being a part of the IPC intentional community entails. If I am a share holder of the International Permaculture Community S.A. this contract is also automatically binding and thus my signature may not be required here.

I furthermore take the responsibility for the safety of my self and any dependents, children, pets or otherwise that will be visiting or living in the IPC lands and absolve the IPC Tribe & IPC Corporation for any injuries or indemnities occurring to me or my dependents there on.

Applicants signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed & dated on: \_\_\_\_\_