

Should SYCL be priced the same within and beyond Europe?

I see from the plan that SYCL website cost for local communities is of 99 Euros. While I'm aware of the need to pay its costs and generate some revenue for other activities, as well as that this price is quite cheap for the services and profit it will potentially provide, it nonetheless can be quite expensive for a local community (especially when the value will be multiplied by X due to currency exchange rates). In particular, I have in mind the community with which I've started articulating a possible collaboration. It is a place that I think has huge potential due to the enlightened mindset of many people that live there, some of which who have dedicated the last 30 years to improve the education system and restore forest and hence water quantity and quality. But in the last 5 years, due to a series of events, most of the people involved in this work - which started when a couple founded a school 30 years ago to provide a decent education to their 21 adopted children - have been working for free and even putting money from their pockets to keep things going. For example, for lack of money to hire helpers, parents have been dedicating each one day a week to clean and cook in the school. The situation regarding support from the local government now is starting, at quite a slow pace, to get better, and I think that the local authorities might become more interested once I start participating in meetings with them reporting collaboration plans on behalf of IUCN (though I don't think that at this point they even know what IUCN is). Local government might even decide to put some money into it, for example for paying SYCL's annual subscription. But at an initial stage I doubt very much that the people interested will have money to pay or that the government who has to be gradually convinced of the importance of what we're doing will accept to pay. Having this in mind, I was wondering if it would be a viable option to offer SYCL for free in the first year, for those communities that cannot pay (and there could be a form where they explain why they can't pay initially). During this first year they would then generate revenue from using SYCL that could allow paying the annual subscription starting on the second year. One would expect revenue to increase to a certain extent from year to year, so paying thereafter should not be a problem. Of course, as these things seem to go, it could be that someone from the local community that can, say, translate to English or has some other skill, could accept to work for the benefit of the community and use part or all the pay she/he would receive from IUCN to pay for SYCL. On a first instance here in Brazil, that person could even be me, though due in part to overwhelming work load I'd think I'd prefer to try to find someone else.

I thought I should share these thoughts with you now in case making SYCL subscription for free on the first year could open up more possibilities for other coordinators working with communities that might not have the money initially. Part of advocating for this comes from my personal view that a community with great interest and indeed one that has been putting a lot of effort into conservation but has little money might be a more productive initial target for us than one that has a lot of money and no conservation-oriented mindset at this point (of course, the latter could after a while find motivation in the success of the first).