

Target 21: Participation & rights holders

Scope of the target

- Respect for human rights and IPLCs rights, including land and resource rights, particularly of women

IPLCs have conserved 80% of existing biodiversity, but they only are able to do so where their rights are well respected.

Environmental defenders get killed – or their basic rights otherwise violated- while they are working to conserve the environment. Respect for their rights is vital for ensuring the environment doesn't get undermined.

- Broad participation in full, equitable and effective participation in decision-making related to biodiversity, by IPLCs, women, girls, youth and all other civil society groups.

Without proper participation, there is no ownership, and plans do not get followed up. Participation is an essential component of good governance, as it helps to improve plans, to gather additional facts and perspectives, and to raise attention to challenges that need to be overcome.

Note that participation needs to be well defined, ensuring it to mean real involvement of rightsholders groups, and avoiding consultations of types which are so specialised that the people can't give input.

Addressing elements in the right order

- Make this the first target.

Because this issue is cross-cutting and a prerequisite for all the other targets

- Separate respect for Human Rights and participation, and bring human rights in the first place

Respect for human rights is a prerequisite for all other participatory measures.

Elements that should be part of the target

- **Free, Prior and Informed Consent**

The principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) for IPLCs is established by international human rights standards such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

- Access to information

All civil society groups and concerned citizens have the full right to be aware of the state of the environment, and the threats and risks to it from any given industry or development project.

- Access to justice

Rights and participation become meaningless if they are not being upheld by justice systems

Further reading on target

- The essential rights for community forest management, Friends of the Earth International, <https://www.foei.org/publication/essential-rights-community-forest-management/>