

# ECO

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Special issue by IIFB

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## Integration of Article 8(j) and provisions related to indigenous peoples and local communities in the work of the Convention and its Protocols

The following statement will be delivered on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB).

The item 13 decides to complete the multi-year program of work on 8(j) by COP-14 and to integrate the future work on 8(j) into the post 2020 biodiversity framework. It also outlines that the working group on 8(j)-11 should propose the institutional framework for future work on traditional knowledge, for further discussion of SBI-3 and adoption by COP-15.

The timeframe for the completion of these two strands of work by COP-15 is too short, and creates big challenges for indigenous peoples and local communities and for the parties of the convention. We foresee a need for a WG8(j)-12 to complete this work.

Parties and indigenous peoples and local communities have expressed that the form must follow the function, meaning that the institutional arrangements cannot be decided before the finalisation of the post 2020 biodiversity work plan. Therefore this work cannot be completed before COP-15, and we will need a process after COP-15.

We propose the following roadmap for this work:

Working Group of 8(j)-11 will consider

- the submissions of the future of 8(j)
- the submission for the future work under the post 2020 biodiversity framework
- and the summary of the online forum

The outcomes of WG8(j)-11 will be forwarded to SBI-3.

There should be full and effective participation of IPLC's, including women and youth, both in the 2019 consultation period and the 2020 consensus building period on the post 2020 biodiversity framework, consistent with the paragraph 13 of the present decision and decisions under item 17 on the long-term strategic visions to the 2050 vision for biodiversity.

COP-15 adopts the post 2020 biodiversity framework.

WG 8(j)-12 will consider the post 2020 biodiversity framework, to propose a program of work for 8(j) and related provisions, and corresponding institutional arrangements. To facilitate this work, an ATHEG (Ad-Hoc Technical Expert Group) will be needed to be convened in 2021.

COP-16 will adopt the next program of work on article 8(j) and related provisions and the institutional arrangements.

## Indigenous Peoples Traditional Knowledge is Key (Article 4) Biodiversity and Climate Change

*By Edna Kaptoyo, GEF SGP Indigenous Peoples Fellow*

Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) live in some of the most fragile ecosystems, and whether in

the lowlands, forests, plains or valleys, they are negatively impacted by climate change. More so, IPLCs have seen the changes and experienced the impacts of climate change for generations and have used different adaptation strategies in responding to climate change. Sustainable use practices by IPLCs have helped conserve many of these environments, and these practices continue to provide healthy ecosystems, crucial for life on earth.

Human impacts on biodiversity have accelerated negative impacts to the livelihoods, food systems, lands and territories of IPLCs and the resources they rely on. According to the IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming, one of the key messages is that we already see the consequences of 1°C of warming through more extreme weather events, and that by limiting climate change people and ecosystems will have more room to adapt.

Traditional knowledge from IPLCs is key for the resilience of the different ecosystems, and it can help communities to cope with climate change. For example, indigenous peoples are key in disaster risk reduction that offer warnings and strategies to protect livelihoods from floods, and in using bio-indicators for weather forecasting.

The UNFCCC recognizes the important role that IPLCs' traditional knowledge plays in climate change adaptation. The UNFCCC COP 23 decided on a process to operationalize the IPLC platform. This platform will promote the exchange of experience and best practices in applying, strengthening, protecting and preserving IPLC traditional knowledge. Further, it will promote practices and efforts of IPLCs related to addressing

and responding to climate change, taking into account the free, prior and informed consent of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices.

The process also aims to strengthen the capacity of IPLCs to enable their engagement in the UNFCCC process, including in implementation of the Paris Agreement and other climate change related processes. The platform should also facilitate the integration of diverse knowledge systems, practices and innovations in designing and implementing international and national actions, programmes and policies in a manner that respects and promotes the rights and interests of IPLCs and contribute to the achievement of the nationally determined contributions of the Parties.

This is an important step under the UNFCCC; however, the importance of biodiversity in climate change has not been recognized in the convention. It is important for CBD to establish synergies with the UNFCCC in their respective national action plans, and to live by its Aichi Target 3 to eliminate harmful incentives to biodiversity and develop and apply positive incentives for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

## **The importance of dialogue**

Since the Rio Summit in 1992, indigenous peoples have participated in dialogues on the preservation of our environment using their traditional knowledge that they have studied and preserved for centuries.

At the last CBD meeting, COP13 in Mexico, indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) celebrated 20 years work of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB). This year here in Sharm el-Sheikh, the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network will celebrate its 20-year anniversary. This achievement will be celebrated during the closing ceremony of the three-day nature and culture summit, organized by the Government of Egypt, the secretariat of the UNESCO convention and other partners.

In 2002, during the world summit held in Johannesburg, the final declaration noted "the vital role of indigenous peoples and local communities in sustainable development".

This statement remains true today, and we need to continue to recognize the role and participation of IPLCs in sustainable development. IPLCs have the knowledge that they used to conserve and protect natural resources for centuries with a clear ecosystem approach, restoration and sustainable use. It was this knowledge that they

used to adapt to climate change, using drought cycle management to embrace and mitigate desertification, while reducing the impact of climate change on biodiversity destruction.

Our planet is tired, and the Mother Earth shows us negative signs of climate change - we need to restore our ecosystems.

In order to live in harmony with nature we need to restore our ecosystems to be healthy, and we need to apply a human rights approach as we take a holistic view of the 2020 concept in the field of biodiversity, and our approaches to the 2030 agenda and other development initiatives such as an agenda for 2063 for our continent.

We must always keep in mind that it is important to fully engage IPLC women and young people in the biodiversity dialogue and ensure participation in the planning, implementation and monitoring of development programs.

## Listening to the voice of our Mother Earth

We, the Indigenous Women's Network on Biodiversity, are alarmed by the threats faced by our Mother Earth, including the rate of black carbon emissions that cause major changes in the climate, and the mercury pollution that is affecting the health of our biodiversity, our planet and our peoples.

Indigenous women have been guiding indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) on sustainable use of natural resources for centuries. Traditional knowledge of women in crafts, ethno-tourism, and cuisine has been effectively fostering socio and economic development of indigenous communities and promoting the eradication of poverty without the introduction of external industries and activities. These examples should be considered in planning for the post 2020 agenda.

IPLCs are guardians and caregivers for Mother Earth and indigenous women believe further and deeper analysis is needed to foster inclusive conservation.

Unfortunately, the recognition of indigenous peoples is still pending in some countries, more so indigenous women. In many countries, indigenous women are deprived of human rights and are experiencing violence in its diverse forms. Free, prior and informed consent must be respected for every indigenous person.

Indigenous women are also key holders of traditional knowledge. The loss of indigenous knowledge and languages has a direct effect on, and connection to, the biodiversity of the planet. Indigenous languages represent the voices of our Mother Earth, providing intricate understanding of the diverse ecological and cultural systems.

As Women, from indigenous peoples and local communities, we need to relearn and reconnect with our own indigenous grounded indicators to help recover and strengthen our Indigenous knowledge and further nurture it through educating young children.

## Statement on Socio-economic considerations

The International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) thanks the Secretariat for preparing the documents and the *Guidance on the Assessment of socio-economic considerations in the context of Article 26 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety*.

This Guidance is voluntary, but considering the novelty of issues and concerns of living modified organisms (LMOs) and its possible impacts on the environment, biodiversity, and genetic resources, the IIFB recommend that the Guidance to be mandatory (мандатори) for all Parties with the involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities.

We appreciate the participation of a representative of the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to the face-to-face meeting of the *Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Socio-Economic Considerations*. In this regard, the IIFB supports the extension of the AHTEG and would urge Parties and donors to continue to provide funds to ensure our full and effective participation during these meetings, and in all discussions relevant to socio-economic considerations.

It is highly important to develop the Strategic Plan of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period post 2020 with full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities from each 7 regions. The Protocol lacks capacity building framework for IPLC and this must be included for effective participation in the post 2020 framework.

We would like to emphasize that socio-economic impacts may differ from different sectors across society, and that these socio-economic considerations include in their assessment the specificity (специфити) of the situation of women and youth, especially in relation to traditional knowledge among indigenous peoples and local communities.

## Review of progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

The IIFB has no further changes to make to this draft decision, because we feel that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' concerns are adequately covered. But we wish to share some observations made by IIFB members present at this meeting who shared our experiences of national implementation.

The Convention on Biological Diversity, together with the Nagoya Protocol and the Cartagena Protocol have given impetus for the elaboration of national laws and policies on traditional knowledge and access and benefit-sharing. But many of these laws and policies are either at an early stage and are not yet being fully implemented. In many countries, Governments have not yet fully engaged indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in the elaboration of NBSAPs and national reporting. Data from 5th National Reports show that only 20% of CBD parties have included actions by IPLCs in their reports.

Hopefully the 6th National Reports will show significant improvement. Indigenous peoples representatives from Costa Rica, the Philippines and Canada have reported that their governments have successfully worked with them in elaborating biodiversity strategies and laws on community conservation, protection of species and customary sustainable use of

biodiversity. By 2020, IIFB looks forward to all Parties reporting similar progress in their engagement with IPLCs supported by the appointment of National Focal Points on Traditional Knowledge in all countries.

On our part, IIFB commits to making Local Biodiversity Outlooks 2 (LBO2), both printed and online, a rich source of updated data and information about our collective actions in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Monitoring the contributions of IPLCs' at the local, national and regional levels provides greater accuracy of data, promotes sharing of best practices and learning exchange and enhances democratic governance at multiple scales.

This will include raising wider awareness of the linkages between Indigenous Peoples' traditional management of lands and territories, and biodiversity, and WG8j's existing work on linkages between nature and culture.

We believe that strong partnerships between IPLCs, Governments, and other actors are needed to make further progress over the next 2 years.

We are convinced that Indigenous Knowledge and Local Knowledge can help chart our paths towards the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature.

*The opinions, commentaries, and articles printed in ECO are the sole opinion of the individual authors or organisations, unless otherwise expressed. The CBD Alliance thanks USC Canada for their support for the ECO.*

**Submissions** are welcome from all civil society groups.

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