

Declaration of the Indigenous Peoples of the World to the UNFCCC COP 17
International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change
Durban, South Africa
December 2, 2011

We, the Indigenous Peoples of the world, united in the face of the climate crisis and the lack of political will of the States, especially the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, demand the immediate adoption of legally binding agreements with shared but differentiated responsibilities, to halt global warming and to define alternative models of development in harmony with Mother Earth.

For decades, Indigenous Peoples have warned that climate change confirms that the harmonic relationship between humans and Mother Earth has been ruptured, endangering the future of humanity in its entirety. The whole model of civilization that began 500 years ago with the pillaging of the natural resources for profit and the accumulation of capital, is in crisis. The alternative is to change the system, not the climate, based on a new paradigm for civilization, Living Well with harmony between the peoples and Mother Earth.

OurProposals

General Framework:

- Recognize and respect the self determination of Indigenous Peoples, in particular our rights to territories and natural resources , in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Ensure and guarantee the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples at all levels, respecting the processes based on consultation and free, prior and informed consent in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Recognize, respect and strengthen the fundamental contribution of the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous Peoples.
- Review the concepts of development based on the accumulation of wealth that emphasizes unlimited exploitation of natural resources.

SharedVision:

- We urge developed countries to agree on a framework of legally binding commitments on concrete greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) reduction targets as the follow-up to the Kyoto Protocol that ends in 2012.
- We propose emissions reductions of at least 45% to 1990 levels by 2020 and at least 95% by 2050.
- Gradual elimination of the development of fossil fuels and a moratorium on new fossil fuel exploitation in or near Indigenous Peoples lands and territories, respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Shared vision for long-term cooperation must not be limited to defining the increase of temperature and the concentration of GHG in the atmosphere, but rather it must include in an integral and balanced manner a set of financing, technological measures on adaptation, capacity building, patterns of production, consumption and other essential issues like the recognition of the rights of Mother Earth to reestablish our harmony with nature.

Technology Transfer:

- Knowledge is universal and may not for any reason be subject to private property and use, and neither should its application in the form of technology. Developed countries should share their technology with developing countries.

- Technology transfer and installation should be immediate, timely, free of any costs, in harmony with Mother Earth and free of conditions, whether they are related to already patented technologies or unreleased information.
- Establish guidelines for creating a multilateral and multidisciplinary mechanism for continuous participatory control, management and evaluation of technology exchange. These technologies should be useful, clean and socially appropriate.
- Establish a fund for financing and inventory of appropriate technologies that are free of intellectual property rights, especially patents that should be transferred from private monopolies to the public domain with free access and at low cost

Adaptation and mitigation:

- Guarantee respect, protection and promotion of indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge and sustainable livelihoods, including the cultural and spiritual aspects.
- Public policies and funds should prioritize full recognition of indigenous peoples' territory. Indigenous Peoples own natural resource use, management and conservation systems should be recognized and promoted.
- The monitoring, reporting and verification system should not be limited to measuring changes in forest coverage, but rather incorporate social variables, specifically those related to the fulfillment of indigenous rights.
- All mitigation and adaptation evaluation, recovery and development actions should incorporate indigenous peoples' knowledge and technologies, subject to their free, prior and informed consent and also guarantee the full participation of indigenous experts.
- We demand that the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recommend to the United Nations High Commission that Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples prepare a report about the impacts of climate change on indigenous peoples.
- The States should ensure that indigenous peoples have the right of mobility and are not forced to relocate far from their traditional territories and lands and that the rights of peoples in voluntary isolation are respected.
- With regards to climate change migration, adequate programs and measures shall be in accordance with their rights, statutes, conditions and vulnerabilities.

Financing:

- All financing mechanisms for climate change mitigation and adaptation must be established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and directly provide resources to Indigenous Peoples.
- To establish participatory mechanisms to guarantee transparency and accountability in all the funding procedures and operations. The resources should come from public monies and be additional to the funds for development aid.
- To establish a special fund that allows Indigenous Peoples and local communities to develop their own activities and contributions to address climate change.
- Developed countries must commit new annual funding of at least 6% of its gross national product to face climate change in the developing countries.
- Funding must be direct, without conditioning and not violate the sovereignty nor the self determination of Indigenous Peoples.
- The international financial institutions, like the World Bank, must no administer the funds created or to be created because they finance projects that contribute to global warming and especially now that the World Bank pretends to eliminate the safeguards on Indigenous Peoples with the "Program for Results" – P4R
- Developed countries, the principal countries that have caused climate change, must assume their historic and current responsibility and recognize and honor their climate debt fully, which is the basis for a just, effective, scientific solution to climate change.

- In the framework of climate debt, we demand that the developed countries return to the developing countries the atmospheric space that is occupied by their GHG emissions.

Carbon markets and related mechanisms:

- The IIPFCC reiterates that the majority of the world's forests are found in Indigenous Peoples' lands and territories. The IIPFCC rejects carbon trading and forest carbon offsets which commodify, privatize and commercialize forests. We are profoundly concerned that REDD+ jeopardizes the future of humanity by providing polluters with cheap permits to pollute thus further entrenching fossil fuel use, which is the major cause of the climate crisis. REDD++ also threatens the survival of Indigenous Peoples and may result in the biggest land grab of all time. The Cancun Accords failed to provide legally binding safeguards on the rights of Indigenous peoples and REDD+ type projects are already resulting in the violation of Indigenous Peoples' rights. REDD+ promotes industrial plantations and can include the planting of genetically modified trees. Furthermore, the inclusion of soils and agricultural practices in REDD+ and other carbon marketing schemes could commodify almost the entire surface of Mother Earth. Similarly, we also reject using the algae of the oceans for REDD+ projects. Forests are most successfully conserved and managed with indigenous forest governance and recognition, demarcation and titling of Indigenous Peoples' collective land and territories.

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