

Indigenous Peoples' Caucus Statement on Climate Change, COP8, UNFCCC

COP 8, UNFCCC, New Delhi, India, October 23 - November 1, 2002

We, the representatives of the Indigenous Peoples of the world gathered at the Eighth Conference of the Parties (COP8) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Kyoto Protocol (KP) held in New Delhi, Republic of India, present the following proposals on the matters that directly concern and affect our peoples and communities.

1. We consider that our Mother Earth is sacred. It must be honoured, protected and loved. This special relationship binds us to conserve the biodiversity for the survival of the present and future generations. Our territories, spiritual, social and bio-cultural resources, which are the fundamental basis for our existence, health and livelihoods, have been threatened by climate change and its consequences. Indigenous Peoples have a unique responsibility and role in conserving the Mother Earth. Due recognition and status should be accorded to us.
2. Global warming and climate change has posed dire challenges to humanity. All over the earth, signs of climate change are apparent. The mounting list of impacts includes the melting of the polar ice caps, rising seas and the inconsistency of the seasons. Climate change is already causing massive loss of lives and homes, species extinction, food and water shortages and poses a threat to survival. Unfortunately there is inadequate awareness of the direct causative factors among governments, inter-governmental agencies, NGOs and local communities.
3. Our duty as indigenous peoples, to Mother Earth impels us to demand that we be provided adequate opportunity to participate fully and actively at all levels of local, national, regional and international decision making processes and mechanisms on climate change.
4. We, Indigenous Peoples, live in sensitive zones where effects of climate change are most devastating. Traditional ways of life are disproportionately affected by climate change particularly in polar and arid zones, forest, wetland, river and coastal areas.
5. The Kyoto Protocol is not sufficient to reverse, mitigate or stop the catastrophes that threaten our Mother Planet Earth. We, the indigenous peoples are profoundly concerned about Articles 3.3 and 3.4 of the Kyoto Protocol and the Land-Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry negotiations. We are also seriously concerned that efforts to curtail GHG emissions are giving precedence to the export of such problems to the South.
6. Thus, we reaffirm our previous declarations of the First International Forum of Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change at Lyon, France in September 2000, Declaration of Second International Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change, The Hague, November 2000, and Indigenous Peoples Statement at Seventh Conference of the Parties at Marrakech, Kingdom of Morocco, 5th November 2001, Indigenous Peoples Political Declaration at Bali, Indonesia,

June 2002, the Kimberley Declaration, South Africa August 2002.

7. We also recall and reaffirm the international provisions that ensure our participation and contribution within discussions. The specific rights we are demanding are already acknowledged in the international arena in other international instruments of equal importance to the UNFCCC, including:

The Rio de Janeiro Declaration on the Environment and Development (in particular Principle Agenda 21); the Program of Action on Sustainable Development (in Particular, Chapters 11 and 26); the Convention on Biological Diversity (in particular Article 8 (j) and related provisions); the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Declaration of World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2002, the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Statement on Forest Principles; Convention 169 of the ILO on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples; and other additional instruments, principles and programs of the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

We draw urgent and specific attention to the recognition of indigenous peoples and their vital roles by the political declaration of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 2002.

We call upon the States Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that:

- a. The Conference of Parties 8 to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change recognize the fundamental role of Indigenous Peoples in tackling climate change and environmental degradation to restore the natural balance. The accreditation with special status of Indigenous Peoples in all the organs, activities, and COPs of the UNFCCC is fundamental to the success of these processes.
- b. COP 8 approve the creation of a Working Group of Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change to meet the objectives to study and propose timely, effective and adequate solutions in response to the urgent situation caused by climate change. Furthermore, COP 8 should provide necessary support to indigenous peoples including full and effective participation in all levels of discussion, decision making and implementation as well as ensuring that the necessary funding be provided to guarantee such participation and to strengthen its capacity.
- c. Include Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change as a regular agenda item on the agenda of the COPs and its Subsidiary Body meetings.
- d. The UNFCCC and its processes establish relations with other UN instruments, mechanisms, platforms and processes of concern to Indigenous Peoples, inter alia the Commission on Human Rights, ECOSOC, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the International Labour Organization, the Convention on Biodiversity, and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.
- e. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Joint Implementation (JI) must incorporate principles which address transparency, free, prior and informed consent and benefit sharing with Indigenous Peoples in order to accomplish the objectives of lowering greenhouse gas

emissions and achieving sustainable development in developed and developing countries.

f. We, the Indigenous Peoples, vigorously support the creation and financing of the Adaptation Fund which should be employed according to the recommendations of the Second International Indigenous Conference on Climate Change. Our peoples are continuously suffering from the adverse impacts of climate change. Therefore, we should be included as direct beneficiaries of such a fund.

g. We, the Indigenous Peoples, express our desire to be included in UNFCCC capacity building initiatives and propose that special capacity building be undertaken for indigenous peoples. Such capacity building would strengthen our ability to exercise our right to fully participate in climate change negotiations.

We urge governments to reinvigorate their political will and commitments for meaningful translation of their commitments made in WSSD for due recognition of indigenous peoples for promoting sustainable development.

We, the representatives of the Indigenous Peoples gathered at COP 8 in New Delhi, Republic of India, consider that the concerns and recommendations expressed in the Statement will help the peoples of the world in tackling the adverse effects of climate change and contribute to sustainable development.

Signed by the representatives of Indigenous Peoples present at COP 8 of UNFCCC in New Delhi, Republic of India, 24th October 2002.

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