



JOINT SUBMISSION FROM ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PACT (AIPP) AND INTERNATIONAL WORK GROUP FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS (IWGIA)

WHAT COULD BE POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' PLATFORM? A SUBMISSION BASED ON THE THREE FUNCTIONS OF THE PLATFORM

I. A SIGNIFICANT SHIFT FROM TRADITIONAL OBSERVER STATUS TO SECURED SPACE FOR EQUAL PARTICIPATION

Indigenous peoples are a recognized observer constituency under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Indigenous peoples' rights to full and effective participation in decisions affecting their lives has been recognized by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the UN has over the past decades developed a number of good practices to implement this important principle. However, as the UNFCCC is a party-driven process, there have been major challenges for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in the decision-making process under this Convention. Nevertheless, indigenous peoples' participation in the Convention has evolved, from them being merely observers, to secured space for equal participation after the establishment of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples (LCIP) Platform at the Twenty First Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP21) in Paris, France. The incremental operationalization of the platform and consistent concerted efforts of indigenous peoples through the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) have engendered an unprecedented space and opened for opportunities for indigenous peoples to directly engage in the decision making process of the LCIP Platform.

Over the past two years, we have seen a number of good practices for the effective participation of indigenous peoples in the operationalization of the LCIP Platform. On 16-17 May 2017, Grace Balawag, an indigenous woman from the Philippines, selected by the IIPFCC, and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) Chair co-chaired two half day multi-stakeholder dialogues on the LCIP Platform. This is the first time in the history of indigenous peoples' engagement in the UNFCCC that an IIPFCC self-selected representative co-chaired a SBSTA session. This space for co-chairing continued in 2018 when Roberto Borero, an indigenous man from North America, co-chaired with the SBSTA Chair a multi-stakeholder dialogue on 1 April 2018. Besides space for co-chairing, all LCIP Platform negotiations were opened for observers and hence indigenous peoples were able to attend the negotiations. And even

further, indigenous peoples were invited by the co-facilitators and with the consent of the parties, to share their perspectives, concerns and recommendations in the informal negotiations. This unprecedented constructive engagement between indigenous peoples, UNFCCC parties and the UNFCCC Secretariat resulted in the establishment of the LCIP Platform Facilitative Working Group (FWG) in 2018, comprising seven representatives of indigenous peoples, one from each of the seven United Nations indigenous socio-cultural regions; and seven representatives from the UNFCCC parties. The unique feature of this working group is that representatives of indigenous peoples and parties will have equal status and say on matters relating to the Platform. Unlike other UN processes in which indigenous peoples engage, the UNFCCC will respect and accept the self-selected representatives of indigenous peoples for the FWG. Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) commend the constructive partnership spirit between indigenous peoples, UNFCCC parties and the UNFCCC Secretariat during the journey of operationalizing the Platform and welcome the decision adopted by COP24 in Katowice, Poland.

II. AIPP AND IWGIA PARTNERSHIP ON CLIMATE CHANGE

AIPP and IWGIA, through our partnership on climate change, have since 2009 been carrying out a series of awareness raising and capacity building initiatives with indigenous peoples and we have developed and published a number of policy papers and produced training manual for effective engagement and advocacy of indigenous peoples in different countries in Asia and Africa. AIPP and IWGIA are proud to see that knowledge products on climate change developed for these region is being contextualized and used by indigenous peoples' organizations in various regions. The AIPP and IWGIA partnership has increased the capacity of indigenous peoples resulting in constructive policy engagement and influence at different levels. We have also consistently supported indigenous representatives to participate in UNFCCC meetings, both intersessional and the Conference of Parties (COPs). We believe that part of the capacity building function of the platform is the direct access of indigenous peoples to the UNFCCC meetings, not only to participate in the LCIP Platform activities, but also to build the capacity of indigenous representatives to influence policies and to bring achievements and decisions from the UNFCCC to the ground in their countries and to make them work where they really have an impact. We therefore believe that this is an important element for localizing and effectively implementing climate actions. AIPP and IWGIA will continue to share its climate change partnership experiences in the LCIP platform.

III. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' KNOWLEDGE: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

Indigenous peoples' knowledge and knowledge systems are getting increasing recognition and space in the UNFCCC, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), the Inter-Governmental Platform on Biodiversity and Eco-System Services (IPBES) and the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Despite this, indigenous peoples' knowledge has been facing challenges of which one is how to facilitate that these knowledge systems and practices continue to thrive and advance. At present, it has been observed that there is a continuing loss of indigenous peoples' knowledge due to non-transmission of knowledge from generation to generation and due to external pressures in varied forms. It is universally accepted that knowledge will disappear if not used and transmitted across generations. Therefore, enabling an environment for exchange and application of knowledge for its continuity and propagation is vital. There remains a lot to be done at country and local levels in order to realize this. It is therefore necessary to organize and/or strengthen knowledge holders (based in the communities) and establish

platforms to enable their participation at the local, country, regional and international levels for concerted advocacy and lobbying on protection of indigenous peoples' knowledge a knowledge systems - and the contribution of indigenous peoples' knowledge towards climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as in the conservation and promotion of bio-cultural diversity. In this regard, AIPP is going to launch in 2019 a regional network on indigenous peoples' knowledge with following goal:

- *Indigenous knowledge holders and community learning centres are recognized as champions and are actively contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation including conservation and promotion of biodiversity and eco-system services.*

The specific objectives of the network are as follows:

- *To revitalize and strengthen indigenous peoples' knowledge and knowledge systems and establish strong community learning centers at local level and knowledge platforms at country and regional levels.*
- *To promote sustainable resource management and conservation of biodiversity to contribute to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; post-2020 global biodiversity framework and Paris Agreement.*
- *To enhance the role and participation of indigenous knowledge holders and practitioners (women, men, youths and elders) in dialogues and advocacy, knowledge exchanges and upscaling of good practices and innovations among communities.*

IV. AIPP AND IWGIA PROPOSALS ON THE POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES FOR THE LCIP PLATFORM

AIPP and IWGIA would like to assert in the outset that all the activities of the LCIP Platform should be anchored in a human rights based approach, particularly with a focus on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and International Labor Organization Convention No. 169. The activities of the LCIP platform must be implemented in accordance with the following principles proposed by indigenous peoples and adopted by COP23:

- *Full and effective participation of indigenous peoples*
- *Equal status of indigenous peoples and parties including in leadership roles*
- *Self-selection of indigenous peoples' representatives in accordance with indigenous peoples' own procedures and*
- *Adequate funding from the Secretariat and voluntary contributions to enable three functions of the platform*

In relation to the call for submissions on possible activities for LCIP platform, AIPP and IWGIA propose, among other possible activities, the following activities for the three functions of the Platform:

A. KNOWLEDGE

- Organize seven regional multi-stakeholder learning exchanges, one in each socio-cultural region, and one international multi-stakeholder learning exchange per year to facilitate sharing and documentation of knowledge, innovation and technologies of indigenous peoples including inter-generational transfer of knowledge on climate change adaptation and mitigation. The exchanges should be organized in partnership with indigenous peoples.
- Support indigenous peoples' led research of their knowledge systems and help publishing outcomes of this indigenous peoples' research in a culturally sensitive way and including through audio-visual materials. Prior to publishing, the free, prior and informed consent of respective indigenous

communities, knowledge holders and practitioners must be ensured¹.

- FWG members of the LCIP platform should regularly communicate and coordinate with representatives of Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); Inter-Governmental Platform on Biodiversity and Eco-System Services (IPBES) and UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and explore possible joint partnerships on traditional knowledge and existing other knowledge systems.

B. CAPACITY FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Undertake capacity building needs assessment among indigenous peoples and UNFCCC parties and develop relevant information, education and communication (IEC) materials² on indigenous peoples' knowledge and knowledge systems, as well as on indigenous peoples' engagement in the UNFCCC, including in the LCIP Platform, in national and indigenous languages³.
- Organize training and workshops including webinars for representatives of indigenous peoples, UNFCCC parties and climate change actors on traditional knowledge, the Paris Agreement and indigenous peoples' rights at different levels.
- FWG members should explore synergies with existing initiatives including the Durban Forum on Capacity Building and the Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB).

C. CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES AND ACTIONS

- Request the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to prepare a special report on indigenous peoples' knowledge and knowledge systems; and land rights of indigenous peoples and propose specific policy recommendations to strengthen this knowledge at international, national and local levels. The report should include specific sections for indigenous women and indigenous youth.
- UNFCCC parties should designate their respective LCIP Platform focal points and establish LCIP platforms at country level to facilitate regular policy dialogue workshops on the roles and contributions of indigenous peoples, including indigenous women and youth, in sustainable natural resource management and nationally determined contributions (NDCs). It is important to ensure indigenous peoples' full and effective participation in designing, reporting and monitoring of NDCs.
- Organize multi-stakeholder policy dialogues on indigenous peoples' knowledge, knowledge systems and land rights at regional and international levels.
- Find practical and effective avenues for the LCIP Platform to inform wider policy and decision making of the UNFCCC in order to ensure that indigenous peoples' needs, concerns and contributions are not treated as an isolated area in the LCIP Platform but that there is really policy influence happening.

The activities that cut across all the functions of the platform include:

- FWG representatives of indigenous peoples and parties should regularly monitor and report on how UNFCCC parties and indigenous peoples are implementing the three functions of the LCIP Platform at regional, national and local levels.
- Parties must provide adequate financial support for the successful implementation of the three

¹ It is important that contents of the knowledge products published in different languages be shared with and feedback taken from respective knowledge holders, practitioners and community members. This should be done in partnership with indigenous peoples' organizations.

² IEC materials could include booklets, posters, comic books, animation videos and songs, among others.

³ Its important to map out existing knowledge products published by various indigenous peoples' organizations, UN agencies and CSOs that could be relevant to build the capacities of indigenous peoples, UNFCCC parties and the UNFCCC Secretariat. This mapping exercise will prevent duplication of the knowledge products.

functions of the LCIP Platform and for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, particularly indigenous women and indigenous youth in all the activities of the LCIP Platform.

- We believe that, in order to adequately implement the LCIP Platform and to provide the expert knowledge and capacity that this requires, including to ensure full compliance with the UNDRIP in all actions of the platform, the UNFCCC should establish a senior position within its secretariat for a focal person on indigenous peoples' issues. This would follow the best practice of other bodies, such as the Green Climate Fund and the CBD.
 - Access for indigenous peoples' representatives to the UNFCCC meetings is an important element of knowledge sharing, capacity building and policy influencing and hence will ensure advancement in all three functions. We therefore recommend that the UNFCCC establish a Fund that will support the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives (beyond members of the LCIP Platform) in these meetings.
-

For further information, please contact:

- Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP): Mr. Lakpa Nuri Sherpa at nuri@aippnet.org
 - International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA): Ms. Kathrin Wessendorf at kw@iwgia.org
-