

Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform under the UNFCCC

Submission from Conservation International

The Paris Agreement explicitly recognizes of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities within the context of climate action. In order to deliver on the goals of the Paris Agreement, countries must fully embrace the role that indigenous peoples and local communities can play in national- and international-level mitigation and adaptation actions. At COP 22 in Marrakech, countries agreed to concrete next steps for developing a knowledge platform to exchange best practices for addressing climate change.

Developing this knowledge platform for indigenous peoples and local communities is a first step to formally recognize their contributions to addressing climate change. With the consent, engagement and leadership of knowledge holders, the platform will make indigenous peoples' knowledge available for all—countries, communities and other actors—to guide climate actions. This platform will also contribute to better-informed decision-making from the national to international scales.

Conservation International (CI) supports the submission from the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) on the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' (LC-IP) Platform under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). CI's views on establishing the LC-IP Platform are elaborated further below.

1. Purpose:

The LC-IP Platform should facilitate increased engagement of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) within the UNFCCC negotiations and its processes by providing formal opportunities for IPLCs' diverse knowledge, best practices, experiences and perspectives to guide climate-related decisions and actions at the national and international levels. In establishing the Platform, the UNFCCC should also create an IPLC coordination body to assist in developing and presenting recommendations for consideration at the COP and the meetings of its Subsidiary Bodies on relevant matters.

The Platform will provide a unique opportunity for knowledge exchange and collaboration between IPLCs, the UNFCCC Secretariat, national governments and other climate change actors. It can also secure continued respect and promotion of IPLCs' rights, as recognized by the Paris Agreement.

2. Structure:

Internationally, the Platform should play a convening role for multi-stakeholder engagement between IPLCs, parties, and other actors attending the UNFCCC meetings at the Conference of the Parties (COP) and its Subsidiary Bodies, including opportunities for financial support to coordinate policy efforts and activities at the international, regional and national levels. As part of this coordination, the Platform should convene meetings preceding each COP and other relevant UNFCCC meetings to discuss strategies and contributions related to IPLC engagement

At the regional level, indigenous organizations should convene regional preparatory meetings to consolidate information and studies of best practices prior to the UNFCCC global meetings. The outcomes of these events will feed into the preparation efforts of the Platform's coordination body. Such preparatory meetings can be held as part of regular regional meetings of indigenous organizations.

These meetings may include representatives of States and other stakeholders, when appropriate, to facilitate dialogues.

At the national level, governments should convene national meetings for indigenous peoples to discuss their views on climate-related matters at the national and international levels, as well as their contributions to climate change action. States should ensure the full and effective participation of IPLCs in national efforts for drafting and implementing nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

3. Content:

The establishment of an LC-IP Platform should be accompanied by a fully-funded program within the UNFCCC Secretariat that will serve as the focal point for indigenous concerns on climate change. The program should, *inter alia*, establish and oversee the management of a web-based platform for knowledge exchange where indigenous peoples can freely exchange information and knowledge related to climate change actions. The program within the Secretariat will ensure that the sharing of knowledge is done with the full consent of indigenous knowledge holders and is respectful of the cultural norms associated with such knowledge.

The program should draw lessons from other related experiences, such as the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, to incorporate best practices in developing its program of work.