



INTERNATIONAL  
**INDIGENOUS  
PEOPLES'**  
FORUM ON  
CLIMATE CHANGE

**Submission of the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) on the Purpose, Content and Structure for the Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge platform, [1/CP.21 paragraph 135](#) of the Paris Decision.**

**I. PREAMBLE/OVERARCHING VISION**

The International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) welcomes the opportunity to submit its proposals relating to the Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge platform established by paragraph 135 of the Paris decision which provides as follows:

*135. Recognizes the need to strengthen knowledge, technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and Indigenous Peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change, and establishes a platform for the exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner.*

As foundational principles, the IIPFCC affirms that implementation of paragraph 135 must:

1. Be in accordance with the directive contained in the preambles to both the Paris Agreement and the Paris Decision: “Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote, and consider their respective obligations on human rights...*the rights of indigenous peoples....*”.
2. Recognize that the preamble of the Paris Agreement also calls “for regional and international cooperation to mobilize stronger and more ambitious climate action by all Parties and non-Parties... including... Indigenous Peoples.
3. Be in accordance with, and not fall below, international instruments that recognize the rights of Indigenous Peoples, inter alia, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration), ILO Convention No. 169, The Outcome Document on the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) and the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (American Declaration).
4. Recognize and enable the promotion of Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge as adopted in Article 7, section 5 of the Paris Agreement: *adaptation action should ...be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems....*

5. Provide for full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in all aspects of the Platform's development and implementation, ensure respect for free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) regarding the presentation and use of their knowledge; uphold the right to self-determination, the rights to participate in decision-making in matters affecting their rights, and the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage (UN Declaration Arts. 3, 18, 19,31).

6. Be consistent with the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, WCIP OD, 2014, para, 36: "We confirm that Indigenous peoples' knowledge and strategies to sustain their environment should be respected and taken into account when we develop national and international approaches on climate change mitigation and adaptation."

## II. PURPOSES

A. Paragraph 135 sets out two main purposes:

1. The first purpose is to *strengthen knowledge, technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and Indigenous Peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change.*
2. The second purpose is to establish *a platform for the exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner.*

B. In carrying out these two purposes, other purposes must be served as well.

1. The platform should serve as a vehicle to ensure that the *human rights mandate* contained in the Paris Agreement and the Cancun safeguards decisions are carried forward.

2. The Platform will facilitate and enable the *integration of Indigenous Peoples' diverse knowledge systems*, practices, innovations, experiences and perspectives into all climate change related decisions and interventions, actions, programs and policies, subject to their free, prior, and informed consent in order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of Parties.

3. The Platform will facilitate *direct engagement and participation of Indigenous Peoples* within the UNFCCC negotiation framework so as to promote inclusivity, transparency of decision-making and actions, and to respond to historical marginalization and inequalities experienced by Indigenous Peoples including the appropriation and commercialization of their traditional knowledge and cultural heritage.

4. Facilitate the promotion of holistic approaches as well as the sharing and exchange of traditional knowledge and practices among and between Indigenous Peoples of the world, and also between Indigenous Peoples, State Parties and other knowledge systems/stakeholders in order to build capacities and promote shared understanding within the framework of mutual respect and good faith.

5. Facilitate the participation of traditional knowledge holders and practitioners in the development of policies and programs that value and support the continuation of their contributions.
6. Identify threats and obstacles, and develop effective and comprehensive solutions on the local, national and international levels to support Indigenous Peoples to strengthen, implement and transmit their “traditional knowledge, technologies practices and efforts related to addressing and responding to climate change”.
7. Promote dialogue and foster partnerships, in coordination with other appropriate United Nations funds, programmers and specialized agencies, to respect, promote and consider the rights of Indigenous Peoples when taking action to address climate change.
8. Promote best and effective Indigenous practices and lessons learned and identify challenges and constraints encountered, actions and initiatives to overcome them and important measures for further implementation of the Paris Agreement;

### **III. FUNCTIONS**

In order to serve the purposes described above, the following will be important functions of the platform:

A. To strengthen knowledge, technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and Indigenous Peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change in a variety of ways, including by way of illustration and not limitation:

1. By providing resources for capacity building and for preserving and transmitting to new generations of practitioners, traditional knowledge and cultural expressions at the local, national, regional and international levels.
2. By providing capacity building:
  - i) For Indigenous Peoples to provide models for communicating and sharing knowledge in a manner that is meaningful to other climate change actors, and is in keeping with their own cultural traditions, understandings and their rights including but not limited FPIC;
  - ii) For other stakeholders and governments who might be recipients/end users of this knowledge.

*B. The exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner.*

1. To serve as an interface for the sharing exchange of Indigenous Peoples’ traditional knowledge, and practices among themselves and others, including facilitating communication among relevant Climate change actors and bodies.

2. To develop guidance and to provide advice upon request for sharing of traditional knowledge based on FPIC as well as development of equitable and respectful benefit sharing agreements if desired and requested
3. To ensure active policy and information exchange(s) including with (other) UNFCCC processes and in particular linking the platform to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
4. To facilitate Indigenous Peoples' full and effective participation, including through presentation/inputs at the COPs, UNFCCC subsidiary bodies, work-streams and other fora such as the GCF, technology transfer, Warsaw Mechanism on Loss and damage and enable inputs into the 2018 facilitative dialogue and stock take.
5. To protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples recognized as the minimum standards, as required by the Paris Agreement and Decision and as affirmed in the UN Declaration and other recognized international human rights and environmental instruments and conventions, including rights governing the acquisition and use of Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge. The Platform could support sharing of several types of information, subject to free, prior and informed consent and the development of ethical guidelines for use of such knowledge and for benefit sharing:
  - a. *A registry for TKs holders.* This would not be a database of primary traditional knowledge, but a register of collective holders that agree to be listed in the register.
  - b. *A portal to provide ready access* to published research regarding climate change, both for general observations about Traditional Knowledge, Indigenous and Western science and technologies.
  - c. A portal to support the ability of Indigenous Peoples to secure financial and technical assistance necessary for implementation of climate preparation, adaptation, and mitigation measures on the local, tribal and community level.
6. Periodic review and assessment of progress at the international, regional and national levels in the implementation of actions, examination of science and technology and their relevance to the lands, territories, and resources of Indigenous Peoples and their livelihoods, and highlighting priority areas of work for Parties, the private sector and other relevant institutions;
7. Advance the understanding of knowledge, science, and technologies of Indigenous Peoples, particularly with the aim of supporting, accelerating, encouraging and enabling innovation. Advance Indigenous approaches to research, development, and demonstration, including through facilitation of access to climate technology development and transfer.

## IV. STRUCTURE

The Indigenous Peoples Platform is envisioned as a mechanism for exercising, protecting and affirming the rights of Indigenous Peoples regarding their cultural heritage, right to self-determination and FPIC and its structure must reflect this purpose.

There is a need to structure the platform in order to ensure that knowledge-holders at local level will have an avenue to influence policies at international level.

To achieve this, the following options for activities and structure are proposed:

1. A permanent advisory / facilitative group consisting of:
  - a. 7 Indigenous Peoples' representatives, drawn from the 7 global Indigenous Peoples' regions;
  - b. 2-4 State representatives (1-2 from developed countries, 1-2 from developing countries),
  - c. The SBSTA chair.

Functions of the advisory committee: i) Provide advice in their respective areas of expertise, related to Climate actions under the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC relevant to the purpose and functions of the Platform. ii) make its recommendations directly to the Conference of Parties within the UNFCCC. iii) the Advisory Group will meet twice a year, once during the annual COP and once on an intersessional basis to plan the expert meetings and other areas of relevant work. iv) develop priorities for climate change action based on the input of traditional knowledge holders and practitioners and make proposals to the Parties and UNFCCC in this regard. v) Formulate recommendations and guidelines on Indigenous rights and knowledge within the UNFCCC, including objectives and their outcomes and use information and communication technologies for the achievement of the Paris Agreement, vi) the Advisory Group will develop the platform's work programme, and submit an annual report (to the COP), that will include recommendations to Parties.

2. Expert meetings of Indigenous knowledge holders, to be convened by the facilitative group that facilitates the full and effective participation of knowledge holders and provides the platform's ties to the national / "ground" level practitioners. Expert meetings would be held at regional on a rotational basis as well as global level on an annual basis and can focus on specific relevant thematic areas. They will produce recommendations that can contribute into policy development and ensure policy coherence. The "expert group meetings" are the relevant process to include indigenous traditional knowledge holders and experts from the seven regions, and to enable the best practice exchange with knowledge holders and practitioners. They contribute to defining contents.

3. A Division of the Indigenous Peoples Platform: In order to strengthen the capacity of the UNFCCC to provide substantive assistance and support to the IP Platform in carrying out its mandate, we recommend the establishment of a division (of three people - one with adaptation, one with mitigation, one with Technology and outreach expertise) within

the UNFCCC Secretariat of the Indigenous Peoples Platform to prepare, advocate, facilitate and promote the coordination of work of the platform within the UNFCCC system, working directly with the Advisory Group for the organization of meetings and sessions, to distribute results and outcomes of the Expert Meetings to promote awareness of traditional and Indigenous knowledge within the UNFCCC system, governments, and the public at large. These appointed

Individuals would be subject to an approval process from both the UNFCCC secretariat and the IIPFCC, and preferably be Indigenous.

4. An in-session dialogue at every COP including a report with policy recommendations from the Expert Meetings,
5. An annual high level event / thematic day at each COP, including exploring support for the Indigenous Peoples' "Pavilion" by state parties.

## **V. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION**

- A. The funding of the platform should be included in the regular budget of the UNFCCC.
- B. The Platform must include transparent and enforceable processes for submission, access, storage, and dissemination of TK in keeping with the rights and principles stated above.
- C. There should be a second UNFCCC hosted and supported Session on the Platform before COP23, to review and validate the Outcome report of the May 2017, Bonn meeting.

### **ADDENDA**

- 1) Tecpan Declaration from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Indigenous Peoples Conference on Climate Change, Tecpan Guatemala, March 7-9, 2017
- 2) Other regional or mutli-regional addendums