



ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PACT (AIPP) SUBMISSION ON METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES RELATED TO NON-CARBON BENEFITS RESULTING FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REDD+ ACTIVITIES

March 26, 2014

The Nineteenth Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP 19) recognized the importance of incentivizing Non-Carbon Benefits for the long-term sustainability of the implementation of REDD+ activities¹. This decision has long-term implications for indigenous peoples in Asia especially in relation to the recognition and exercise of their collective rights over their forests.

Asia is the home to two thirds of the world's estimated 350-400 million indigenous people. More than 150 million indigenous people are found in the 12 REDD+ countries in Asia namely Indonesia, Nepal, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Malaysia and Bangladesh. These countries are implementing REDD+ in partnership with the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and The Forest Investment Programme (FIP) of the World Bank and the UN-REDD Programme and receive support for their national REDD+ Programmes. All these REDD+ countries have adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) except Bhutan and Bangladesh, which have abstained. Despite this, most states in Asia do not recognize indigenous peoples with collective rights, especially to their land, territories and resources.

Indigenous peoples and their respective organizations, through the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC), have always been advocating for multiple benefits of forest, not just as carbon sink and storage, in the meetings of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Indigenous peoples have always been asserting the manifold functions of forests including social, cultural, spiritual, environmental and economic values, among others, which are integral to their territorial governance and livelihood systems of indigenous peoples.

For indigenous peoples, the Non-Carbon Benefits of forests include: sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples such as shifting cultivation that provides food security and non-timber forest products; sustainable resource management for food production and enhancement of biodiversity (flora and fauna); spiritual identity, traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples; source of medicinal plants and animals;

¹ Decision 9/CP 19, paragraph 22

and ecosystems services such as watershed, water supply etc. among others. These tangible and intangible benefits are inter-linked and integral to the overall cohesion, governance, identity, cultural heritage and wellbeing of indigenous peoples that are in forest landscapes as part of their territories. Furthermore, these Non-Carbon Benefits are more valuable and critical for indigenous peoples' continued survival and development including their present and future generations, as their identities, livelihoods and cultural heritage are historically rooted in their forests that are part of their traditional territories. It is thereby necessary and imperative to ensure the recognition of the collective rights of indigenous peoples especially to their forest, land and resources, as part of the human rights framework in approaches to Non-Carbon Benefits as well as to the overall design and implementation of REDD+. Likewise, incentivizing Non-Carbon Benefits shall take into account the historical role of indigenous peoples, and in particular indigenous women in forest protection and conservation with a view of providing for their needs and priorities in relation to their overall wellbeing.

In this regard, the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) would like to provide the following recommendations to the 40th session of the SBSTA relating to Non-Carbon Benefits:

1. We request SBSTA to confirm that the scope of Non-Carbon Benefits shall include but not limited to the following:

- i. Sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples such as shifting cultivation that provides food security and non-timber forest products, among others*
- ii. Sustainable resource management for food production and enhancement of biodiversity (flora and Fauna)*
- iii. Spiritual identity, traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples*
- iv. Source of medicinal plants and animals*
- v. Ecosystems services such as watershed, water supply etc.*

2. We urge SBSTA to recognize the need for specific measures and policies to be established and implemented by the Parties and their partners as fundamental and enabling conditions to secure and enhance the Non-Carbon Benefits in REDD+ especially in the lands and territories of indigenous peoples. These measures and policies shall include the following:

- i. Legal recognition and protection of the collective rights of indigenous peoples over their forests as part of their right to their lands, territories and resources*
- ii. Recognition and protection of the sustainable livelihoods and forest management systems of indigenous peoples*
- iii. Recognition of the roles and contributions of indigenous women in sustainable forest resource management, thereby requiring their full and effective participation in all decision-making bodies and processes relating to forest including Non-Carbon Benefits and natural resources*

- iv. *Recognition and protection of indigenous peoples' customary laws and sustainable forest governance systems and decision making processes*
 - v. *Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity*
 - vi. *Measure to fully address and stop the real drivers of deforestation and forest degradation such as commercial logging, forestland conversion, mono cropping and plantations among others.*
3. **We request SBSTA to encourage the Parties to engage in constructive dialogues with indigenous peoples for policy-review and reform, especially on the prohibition/restriction of shifting cultivation, towards addressing forest conservation and management on the one hand, and the livelihoods, rights and entitlements of indigenous peoples on the other. The continuing practice of sustainable livelihood and occupations of indigenous peoples is crucial for the delivery and enhancement of Non-Carbon Benefits.**
 4. **We request SBSTA to urge the parties to recognize the important role of indigenous peoples in community based monitoring systems. Independent and scientific studies have shown that monitoring of Non-Carbon Benefits (i.e. PES) with the participation of and by indigenous peoples is credible, reliable and cost effective. It is thereby important and beneficial for states to collaborate with and establish partnerships with indigenous peoples on community based monitoring as part of the forest monitoring system.**
 5. **We request SBSTA to encourage the Parties to adhere to a human rights framework and ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in the formulation and implementation of methodological guidance on Non-Carbon Benefits and Safeguards Information System (SIS). In line with this, key indicators relating to Non-Carbon Benefits shall be identified in collaboration with indigenous peoples in order to ensure the recognition and respect of the collective rights of indigenous peoples in relation to Non-Carbon Benefits and in all aspects of REDD+.**

[Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact \(AIPP\)](#) is a regional organisation with 47 members in 14 countries in Asia, including countries implementing REDD+, namely, Indonesia, Nepal, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines, Myanmar, Malaysia and Bangladesh. AIPP has been actively working on awareness-raising, capacity building, policy advocacy and networking on REDD+, climate change and key issues of indigenous peoples.

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