AIDESEP & OPIAC's Talanoa Dialogue Submission

October 2018

At the regional level, the Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin have played a fundamental role in the fight against climate change. We have made big contributions through global and regional political advocacy. For instance, we worked hard to ensure the inclusion of a rights-based approach to Indigenous Peoples in the Paris Agreement. We have also fostered key initiatives, such as women's participation in both climate change mitigation and adaptation and the development and implementation of an emerging concept -- the Indigenous economy.

AIDESEP and OPIAC are working to ensure the integration of an Indigenous vision into the climate change agenda; an increase in climate funding dedicated to the Indigenous agenda; the end of oil exploitation, logging, and mining activities; and the development of sustainable, low-carbon, and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Indigenous Peoples can greatly contribute to meeting the climate commitments of countries in the Amazon Basin, where the main source of emissions comes from the Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector. It has been shown that Indigenous territories in the Amazon are "living barriers" against deforestation[i,ii] and that our subsistence practices are compatible with ecosystem conservation[iii]. Communal lands have a high potential for maintaining ecosystem services, sequestering carbon, reducing contamination, and conserving water[iv]. Without Indigenous involvement, empowerment, and direct participation in forest conservation, countries in the Amazon will not be able to meet their NDCs and globally-important carbon sinks will be lost.

The authors of this submission to the Talanoa Dialogue – OPIAC and AIDESEP – are regional organizations that represent Indigenous communities of the Colombian and Peruvian Amazon. These organizations are important participants in the climate and environmental agenda.

OPIAC is the Colombian Amazon Indigenous Peoples Organization. It is a nonprofit Indigenous organization that politically represents 22 organizations and 56 Indigenous Peoples groups from six departments in the Colombian Amazon at national and international levels.

AIDESEP is the Interethnic Development Association of the Peruvian Amazon representing 51 Indigenous Peoples groups in the Peruvian Amazon, which includes 1809 native communities organized into 109 local federations and 9 regional organizations.

1: Where are we?

What climate change impacts have already been observed?

In the Amazon Basin, the impacts of climate change are already affecting Indigenous Peoples' livelihoods. Members of OPIAC and AIDESEP have identified tangible impacts, particularly related to natural environmental cycles. The direct impacts we have experienced are part of a chain reaction that affects everything, from health to production, education, and quality of life.

OPIAC
It is impossible to separate our concern about this global issue from the overwhelming development model, which is the root cause of disruptions to natural cycles in our territories and to our way of life. Climate change management in Indigenous territories is not limited solely to matters pertaining to climate mitigation and adaptation.

In Colombia, Amazon Indigenous Peoples are the ancestral guardians of nearly 26 million hectares that are legally recognized as Indigenous reservations, of which 94% are forests. Our interdependence on the forest ecosystem for our subsistence and culture has motivated our strong historical struggle to defend our culture and territories as a means to halt climate change. At the same time, this interdependence has made us highly vulnerable to this global calamity. This is palpable in the various changes to natural climate cycles that have disrupted social relationships and the relationship between society and nature, given that climate plays a role in the ecological and ceremonial calendar that defines the timing of rituals (e.g., dancing, healing) and activities related to the use of different natural resources.

For example, sharp increases and decreases in river levels have affected fish production—our primary protein source. In some cases, communities have had to move fields away from rivers to avoid flooding from unpredictable increases in water levels. High temperatures have resulted in people dedicating less time to agricultural work, since it is difficult to do field labor during the hottest part of the day. Irregularities in rainy seasons have also disrupted rituals that are done to prevent disease and establish spiritual harmony.

AIDESEP
Amazon Indigenous Peoples in Peru represent 13.4% of the national population. There are currently native communities on titled territories spanning 13,881,756 hectares, which face serious threats and environmental and climate impacts. We can no longer talk simply of climate change, but rather we are facing a real climate, environmental, social, and cultural disaster, at the global level and especially in Peru, which is the third most vulnerable country on the planet. Below, we identify the primary impacts we have observed:

- Changes in natural cycles are causing an increase in plagues, droughts, and crop cycle disruptions, and decreased fish production in lakes.

- Natural disasters, such as flooding, droughts and forest fires, have increased. An impact on infrastructure has been observed, with the destruction of bridges, roads, houses, and schools, and food production has been affected, with failed harvests and the scarcity of fruit and other forest products. The increased frequency of fires, the result of extreme droughts, is partially responsible for deforestation, "savannahization", and biodiversity loss.
- Diseases and epidemics, such as malaria, dengue fever, and gastrointestinal illnesses have become more frequent and have appeared in unexpected places, causing an increase in students missing school.

What measures have our organizations already taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

First and foremost, any mitigation and adaptation action related to forests must be fully incorporated into a human rights-based approach: land tenure and ownership rights and the recognition of traditional knowledge and livelihoods, traditional laws and governance, and Indigenous forest management. Indigenous territories are places of conservation in and of themselves, and it is the traditional knowledge held and practiced by Indigenous Peoples, and which is an active part of our culture, that contributes to confronting climate change.

OPIAC

Indigenous Peoples and organizations have made great efforts to position the work we have done to defend our territories, culture and ethnic diversity, and to make sure our ancestral contributions to preserve Amazonian forests are recognized and valued within the framework of policies, regulations, and institutions of the Colombian State. These efforts are a critical contribution for ensuring our climate mitigation and adaptation ambitions. Without the adequate recognition of our rights and appropriate capacity building, we cannot guarantee the protection of the 24.7 million hectares of forests within our territories, which store 11.973 $MtCO_2$.

Recently, Colombian Indigenous Peoples have defended our participation in the development and implementation of the peace agreements, with the aim of guaranteeing the integrity of Indigenous territories in the face of new development models and regional occupation.

We are stakeholders in various spaces for dialogue and negotiation with the State, which has allowed us to participate in the design and implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy (*Bosques: Territorios de Vida*) and cooperation programs, such as the Joint Declaration of Intent and within the Indigenous pillar of the Amazon Vision Program.

Though these efforts, the objective is to gain recognition and strengthen the traditional Indigenous system for territorial control and management, which inherently tends to conserve biodiversity. Within the traditional Indigenous system, relationships between society and nature are based on respect and exchange with the spiritual owners of flora, fauna, and sacred places. Sustainable use of the environment prevails in the Indigenous management model, avoiding the deterioration of forests and other natural ecosystems.

AIDESEP
AIDESEP is taking measures to support the achievement of the goals of the Paris Agreement and the Peruvian Government – which is to reduce 20% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions non-conditionally and 10% conditionally by 2030 -- and to increase the ambition of this goal since it is still insufficient to halt serious national threats.

These measures are especially important for forest conservation because Indigenous Territories occupy 27% of all tropical forests in Peru and they are one of the best protections against deforestation in the Peruvian Amazon, which is linked to agroindustrial crops and infrastructure.
As such, we are taking the following measures:

1. The consolidation of land rights for Indigenous Peoples, which is an enabling condition to reduce deforestation, backed by Peru's National Strategy for Forests & Climate Change (ENBCC), the Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) between the governments of Peru, Germany and Norway, and the global framework of the Forest Investment Programme (FIP).

- AIDESEP, with the support of the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin (COICA), is fostering Amazon Indigenous REDD+ (RIA), which adapts REDD+ to the cosmovision, rights, and proposals of Indigenous Peoples from Peru and the Amazon Basin.
- The development of the Surveillance, Early Warning, and Action System that includes a proposal for Monitoring, Reporting and Verification with an Indigenous focus (MRV-I), which recommends holistic forest monitoring that estimating uses, benefits and impacts.
- AIDESEP is leading the 'MINGA NDC' (Minga is a Quechua word meaning collective work). This is a call for climate action, which aims to increase the visibility of Indigenous Peoples' contributions as an important contribution to the achievement of Peru's NDC. It identifies 11 key strategies.
- Communities are developing and updating over 100 life plans (*Planes de Vida*), which are instruments for planning concrete actions and measures for the sustainable development of Indigenous communities. These include actions related to mitigation and adaptation, like improving land-use planning and management, which helps strengthen the prevention of risks and natural disasters.

What is the impact of these measures?

OPIAC
OPIAC's advocacy regarding the inclusion of the Indigenous vision in different policies, strategies, and programs has made the Colombian State begin to recognize the role of Indigenous Peoples in the conservation of Amazon forests and our contribution toward the NDC. This recognition is empowering Indigenous organizations and associated grassroots organizations to demand support that secures our environmental and territorial governance systems, allowing us to reduce the risk of losing natural ecosystems and their services due to external threats while also maintaining traditional knowledge and ancestral strategies for comprehensive land management, as guarantors of the forests we protect. This has contributed to the increased credibility of Indigenous organizations, improved access to financial resources, and the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in the national climate agenda.

Our achievements directly impact efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The maintenance of forest carbon is supported by actions like: the expanding and establishing Indigenous reservations; defining restoration actions and payments for environmental services from an Indigenous perspective; promoting an Indigenous economy characterized by a low impact on forests; and the incorporation of Indigenous management tools (e.g., *Planes de Vida*) into official national planning tools. Support for Indigenous Peoples to continue conserving forests within reservations will allow for the maintenance of, among other services, ecological and cultural connectivity between protected areas and Indigenous territories.

Although these are big advances, it will continue to be necessary to reinforce legal recognition and mechanisms that foster Indigenous Peoples' rights to manage and govern our territories and that compensates us fairly benefits provided to humanity.

AIDESEP

AIDESEP has positioned titling, holistic management, and Indigenous territorial self-government as a central contribution to reducing GHGs. To date, we have titled 13,881,756 hectares in native communities and recognized 2,166,587 hectares in communal reserves and 2,856,223 hectares in Territorial Reserves of Indigenous Peoples in Isolation (PIA), which represents over 24% of the Peruvian Amazon. Although funding is still insufficient, AIDESEP has successfully utilized climate funding to start addressing pending territorial demands for tenure recognition and titling of at least 20 million hectares.

AIDESEP's efforts have led to the inclusion of RIA in the ENBCC and also to linking RIA with forest conservation agreements in native communities, also known as Conditional Direct Transfers (TDC). Moreover, these efforts redirected many important funds, such as funding from UN-REDD+ for the Community-Based REDD+ (CBR+) program; the Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (DGM Saweto); and the program to register rural lands funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (PTR3).

We have been able to advance MRV-I, with the recognition of guards and stewards by the Forestry Directorate of the National Forestry Service, in coordination with subnational governments and relevant authorities. The Peruvian government has accepted MRV-I and there is a roadmap for MRV-I be included in the Forest Cover Monitoring Module.

Finally, MINGA NDC is being considered by the Ministry of the Environment (MINAM), in the National Climate Change Commission, and in the regulatory process of the new climate change law through "*DIALOGUEMOS*" (Let's Talk), which is an official process for citizen and non-state actor participation. MINGA NDC has 11 strategies for mitigation, adaptation, and climate management.

2: Where do we want to go?

What is the vision for the future of our organizations regarding global climate change goals?

Our concern with climate change relates to the unsustainable path of the world, with inadequate lifestyle and development models. We seek to defend the right of Indigenous Peoples to healthy territories and livelihoods and to maintain cultural identity and the transfer of knowledge, as these are the foundations necessary to contribute to mitigation, adaptation and resilience actions related to forest conservation.

OPIAC

As the institution that represents Indigenous Peoples in the Colombian Amazon politically, OPIAC's vision for the future, focuses on achieving: *"Indigenous communities with living traditions, who govern and enjoy their territories harmonically, sustainably and in peace."* Securing the achievements made to date and taking on new challenges will establish us as key stakeholders in the fight against climate change. Therefore, we consider that an ideal scenario for 2030 should contain the following elements, at a minimum:

- Formalization of the collective ownership of at least 90% of ancestral Indigenous territories, which will increase the forest area under Indigenous management and governance.
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive Indigenous policy for the Colombian Amazon that stregthens Indigenous governance; safeguards territories against deforestation and degradation threats; fosters economic options to maintain the traditional low-impact use and management of forests; and provides opportunities to young people to stay in their territories and to protect them.
- Legal recognition of the environmental functions and powers of Indigenous authorities for the exercise of authority and governance, which involves control over productive activities that may cause deforestation and degradation (e.g., mining activities, expansion of the agricultural frontier, hydrocarbon exploitation, etc.) and over planning of management, use, and governance of our territories.

AIDESEP

AIDESEP's vision for the future to reduce the impacts of climate change centers on strengthening the cultural and social survival of Indigenous Peoples who exercise the right of self-determination. Moreover, it focuses on contributing to keeping the average global temperature increase below 1.5 °C through community forest management; economic and productive systems that keep forests standing; and the reduction of developmental and extractive pressures. Thus, our goals and expectations are as follows:

- Achieve legal tenure recognition and territorial security on 20 million hectares of Indigenous territories.

- Scale up RIA from the pilot model in the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve, which achieved the holistic management of 400,000 hectares, to over 4 million hectares of Indigenous territories and buffer zones for Indigenous Communal Reserves.
- The Surveillance and Early Action System and MRV-I will halt the territorial, environmental, climate, and social transgressions of environmental crimes, including: land trafficking, illegal logging and mining, and harmful economic activities, like hydrocarbons, oil palm, and agribusiness developments.
- An Indigenous fund will be established, based on the DGM structure and its national Indigenous leadership and local Indigenous executing bodies, in order to implement the 11 strategies of MINGA NDC. Thus, we aim to: (a) create national climate platforms linked to the global platform of Indigenous Peoples and local communities; and (b) to attain the allocation of 1% of the public budget for the development of the Indigenous economy.
- Develop Life Plans (*Planes de Vida*) for 13,881,756 hectares of Indigenous territories in the Peruvian Amazon, not only at community and territory levels, but also at the level of nations and Indigenous Peoples, with a focus on low-carbon, climate-resilient development and that are integrated into national and local planning.

3: How do we get there?

What actions do we propose to achieve our ideal scenarios and contribute to global goals?

In order to achieve the aforementioned visions and also the fulfillment of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda, we believe it is vital to have a holistic and omni-comprehensive vision of the Amazon and the rights of peoples who traditionally and ancestrally inhabit and preserve it – this is considered in the following strategic actions. To meet these commitments, OPIAC and AIDESEP will maintain channels of communication with COICA in order to position key national topics and strengthen territorial and national opportunities for dialogue and participation.

OPIAC
In general, we will prioritize actions that, based on the Indigenous vision, foster the adequate governance of territories to preserve natural ecosystems, as well as ecological and cultural connectivity. Specifically, OPIAC commits to:

- Develop and support the actions of Indigenous affiliated organizations to strengthen Indigenous culture, traditional knowledge, practices, uses and customs for comprehensive forest conservation, as well as for the revitalization of the Indigenous economy.
- Influence the adoption of a comprehensive policy for the Amazon, which recognizes the right of Indigenous Peoples to be the environmental authority. This will enable harmonious land management of our territories, as well as the strengthening of a conservation and protection

vision that goes beyond the development model based on non-renewable resource exploitation.

- Ensure the active and permanent participation of Indigenous Peoples in dialogues included in the review mechanisms for increasing NDC ambition, as set forth in the Paris Agreement (e.g., Global Stocktake).
- Ensure the full recognition of the role of Indigenous Peoples and their territories in the fulfillment of Colombia NDC and the global goals agreed to in the UNFCCC.
- Strengthen community monitoring systems as information sources for sustainable land management and also as official sources for the national MRV system.
- Continue to participate actively in the implementation of the National REDD+ Strategy (*Bosques: Territorios de Vida*) and in results-based payment programs.
- Include the environmental component in OPIAC's political training school, in order to develop new leaders.

AIDESEP

To date, AIDESEP is undertaking new challenges with a comprehensive vision to address climate change and, thus, contribute towards the mitigation-adaptation approach. AIDESEP commits to promote:

- The National Defense Action Plan for the Amazon and Indigenous Peoples: influencing high-level government authorities to strengthen the resilience capacity of forests and Indigenous Peoples.
- The Surveillance and Early Action System and MRV-I: Build and strengthen the capacity of community monitors and stewards, based on environmental and forestry oversight.
- In collaboration with the Peruvian government, AIDESEP will design a proposal to establish an Indigenous climate fund, with the goal of implementing and strengthening Indigenous Peoples' mitigation and adaptation initiatives related to land management and the Indigenous economy. This fund will take into account the DGM Saweto experience.
- The elaboration of a methodological framework and operational plan to implement MINGA NDC strategies. This will be carried out in a coordinated manner together with diverse state and non-state actors at different government levels.
- The full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples for the development and implementation of the integrated climate change management policy, consistent with related economic policy, commitments, and signed bilateral agreements.
- The recognition of an Indigenous constituency, which guarantees that Indigenous Peoples have the right to speak and vote during the process of debate and passing laws.
- The promotion of non-conventional renewable energies (mainly solar) to deliver universal access to energy for Indigenous Peoples in the Amazon, as means to strengthen the Indigenous economy and propel a change in the national energy matrix.

How do our new commitments contribute to the global climate change goals?

OPIAC

Indigenous territories in the Colombian Amazon can greatly contribute to global climate change goals, both to mitigation and adaptation. In that regard, the following contributions stand out:

- Conservation of forest cover in Indigenous territories (24.7 million ha), which is equivalent to over 50% of the Colombian Amazon. This forest area stores around 11,900 $MtCO_2$ – a value that represents 18 times the emissions Colombia must reduce between 2015-2030 according to its NDC.
- Contribution to the absorption potential of sinks, through actions to restore forests on 700,000 hectares within Indigenous territories.
- The active participation of OPIAC in the National REDD+ Strategy (*Bosques: Territorios de Vida*) and in results-based payment programs will strengthen Indigenous governance and the ability to mitigate the deforestation risk in territories by external agents and drivers (e.g., mining activities, hydrocarbon exploitation, agricultural expansion, etc.).
- The protection of forests in Indigenous territories will maintain ecological connectivity between protected areas in the Colombian Amazon and with other areas in the Amazon Biome.

AIDESEP

AIDESEP's proposal is linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), AICHI Targets, and the Paris Agreement's objectives through:

- The conservation and holistic management of 20 million hectares of forests in Indigenous territories, to reduce pressures and threats, such as deforestation, degradation, and forest pollution in Peru – equivalent to over 24% of the Peruvian Amazon area. To date and not considering areas that have yet to be legally recognized, the Indigenous territories with land tenure security safeguard nearly 2 billion metric tons of carbon.
- Contribution to the absorption potential of sinks, through forest restoration on 1,000,000 hectares within Indigenous territories.
- The respect and promotion of Indigenous Peoples' rights, including territorial and collective rights, are explicitly mentioned in the preamble of the Paris Agreement.
- Involvement in the participatory process of the integrated climate change management policy, to ensure an Indigenous vision that integrates social, environmental, health, cultural, territorial, technological, and gender dimensions into the economy, based on an integrated approach between mitigation and adaptation.
- The governance structure of the DGM Saweto is an example to be taken into account, because its valuable lessons-learned, such as targeting resources to the Indigenous agenda to reduce deforestation at intersectoral and multilevel scales.

What opportunities and barriers do we expect and how can we guarantee success?

Advancing these proposals depends on overcoming some barriers, such as sectoral policy barriers that work counter to efforts to mitigate climate change, particularly halting deforestation.

The permanent lack of guaranteed participation in planning for the Amazon territory (e.g., technical inputs, resources for implementing actions) diminishes our capacity to fully apply our sustainable territorial vision. In the face of a scenario characterized by the disarticulation of climate initiatives in the Amazon region, and also often among non-state actors (NGOs, private sector, financial sector), it is a challenge to ensure a coordinated and continuous relationship with our authorities who are respectful of our own government and self-determination.

Another major obstacle is the low budgetary allocation from the Colombian and Peruvian States for the Indigenous territories located in the Amazon region. In Peru, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) maintains a political and technical bias against investment in small Indigenous economies, which hampers the local economic development of communities as planned within Life Plans (*Planes de Vida)*. In Colombia, government investment in Indigenous territories of the Amazon region is almost always limited to the transfer of resources from the General Participation System, which is an acquired right of Indigenous Peoples. However, this does not release the State from its obligations to ensure the social protection of residents of the region.

On the other hand, we envision major opportunities in securing the participation of Amazon Indigenous Peoples in the global climate agenda, since the international community increasingly demands this with greater urgency. Thus, it will be key to take advantage of COICA's international advocacy opportunities to advance AIDESEP and OPIAC's actions.

We must take advantage of the existing funding sources to empower ourselves to manage more resources for the Amazon region and to ensure these resources are channeled effectively to our communities. This must be further strengthened through the opportunities provided by existing regulatory and planning frameworks. In Colombia, some examples are the Administrative Planning Region (*Región Administrativa de Planeación* – RAP) for the Amazon, and the decree that grants the possibility to Indigenous territories, from three departments of the region, to become local governments and achieve administrative autonomy. Although the latter has not been implemented yet, it is a major breakthrough and support to Indigenous Peoples whose territories are located in non-municipalized areas. In Peru, AIDESEP can take advantage of existing climate funds to boost our efforts, including: the JDI-Phase III, which will deliver the results-based payments from a total sum of USD 250 million; the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF); and the FIP from the World Bank for USD 50 million.

With whom can we partner to achieve our visions for Indigenous Peoples and territories and contribute to the global goals?

OPIAC

To meet the objectives and ambition of OPIAC, it is important to work with four kinds of stakeholders. The first of these stakeholders is the national government, and given the need to have broader incidence in national and regional policies, this includes: the National Planning Department (DNP), the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS), the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR), the Presidential Agency for Cooperation (APC), the Amazon Environmental Research Institute (SINCHI), the Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Southern Amazon (Corpoamazonia), and the Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Northern and Eastern Amazon (CDA).

The second group of stakeholders are those related to the international development assistance (governments, foundations, multilateral banks), since they can have more influence on the national government and can raise more funds to directly benefit Amazon Indigenous Peoples.

In the third place, it is necessary to work with NGOs working in the Amazon, especially those supporting processes with Indigenous organizations. Finally, this will require the support of the private sector, through the sustainable management of its supply chains and investments, because they are directly impacting the territories, which can have either positive or negative impacts.

AIDESEP

AIDESEP will keep working closely with the public sector at different levels, such as with the Ministry of the Environment through official dialogues within the National Climate Change Commission. Moreover, AIDESEP will strengthen its work with the National Center for Strategic Planning (CEPLAN) and the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) to ensure our effective participation during the planning process at different governmental levels and sectors, in order to include Life Plans (*Planes de Vida*) as management tools.

We will improve both communication and coordination with the international technical cooperation, in order to continue redirecting climate funds to support the Indigenous agenda, such as the FIP, FIP-DGM, JDI, UN-REDD+, JICA REDD+, Carbon Fund and Adaptation Fund. We will also seek the development of a common action plan.

Furthermore, we will aim to work with the private sector as an “internal” climate funding source to implement Indigenous economy initiatives through loans from specialized banks. It is also important to get involved with the initiative *Nexus+1* and the platform *Líderes+1*. The latter represents a group of companies committed to the B Corporation model, based on reducing the corporate carbon footprint and ensuring equitable relationships between profit and social responsibility.

We will also deepen our work with public and private universities, as well as with local Amazon and intercultural universities, and of course, with the Peruvian Amazon Research Institute (IIAP), which is

currently developing initiatives related to ecosystem services in Amazon territories and the Indigenous economy.

Finally, we will seek to coordinate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and faith-based organizations for more advocacy, technical assessment, and field implementation of climate initiatives related to Indigenous territories.

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