



## World Indigenous Peoples Initiative to the UNSG Climate Action Summit

### Commitments for Action on Climate September 23, 2019

Since time immemorial, Indigenous Peoples have been leaders in adaptation, mitigation, and living reciprocally with their lands, territories, and resources, including oceans and waters. Yet, the continued degradation of Indigenous Peoples' lands, territories, resources, and biocultural diversity resulting from imposed development, causes and compounds the impacts of climate change while reducing our adaptive capacity and creating a false dependency on fossil fuel extraction. Drawing on our knowledge systems, sustainable practices, and rights, we continue to preserve our diverse ecosystems (such as forests, savanna, lands, oceans, waters, and biodiversity). Through this, we steward 80% of the world's biodiversity, and at least 22% of forest carbon, despite comprising only 5% of the world's population. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Land underlines the crucial role of Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge systems contribute to the implementation of the Paris Agreement objectives. If efforts continue to support our rights to lands, territories, and resources, we can increase the amount of carbon captured from 100tC/ha to 625tC/ha, scale-up agroecosystems for sustainable food production, and restore harmony with nature and all life forms. Clearly, we are uniquely positioned to lead transformative change in the face of a climate emergency.

Moreover, access to renewable energy that will contribute to climate mitigation and support Indigenous Peoples' livelihoods must be a crucial element of climate change solutions. Currently, more than 50% of rural Indigenous Peoples do not have access to energy, while such communities are disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of expanding energy projects. The Right Energy Partnership (REP) with Indigenous Peoples aims to promote a human rights-based approach to renewable energy development, and to facilitate access to renewable energy for millions of Indigenous People.

Consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration), International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169, and other international human rights mechanisms, Indigenous Peoples stress the importance of a rights-based approach to all climate action. We commit to working with all partners, including states, donors, civil society organizations to advance Indigenous Peoples' climate leadership.

#### **Our Commitments and Actions are as follows:**

- 1. Implement holistic plans to protect our biocultural diversity, ensuring the inclusion of our most marginalized, through the following two actions:**
  - a. In 2020, to develop transformative long-term plans with specific indicators for sustainable management of lands, territories and resources in our diverse ecosystems, ensuring our full and effective participation in decision-making



processes concerning climate action, environmental protection and sustainable development. The plans shall have specific targets and benchmarks for monitoring to be achieved for 2030 in line with the SDGs and targets for 2050 on the protection and restoration of our forests and biocultural diversity.

- b. In 2020, to develop Indigenous-specific preliminary guidance for enhancing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to ensure Indigenous Peoples' full and effective participation, accounting and enhancement of our contributions at all levels, and a rights-based approach to reduce emission by 45% by 2030 and to net-zero by 2050 with effective adaptation and mitigation responses and increased climate ambitions.
- 2. Develop climate change related actions and activities that secure our rights to lands, territories and resources, our right of self-determination, and the right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), [inter alia UN Declaration] through the following two Actions:**
- a. To work with States, to strengthen the legal recognition and implementation of our rights, particularly our rights to lands, territories and resources in sustainable land use planning, management and governance to prevent conflicts. This will ensure our exercise social, cultural, economic and environmental rights and to safeguard these rights for long-term climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and Disaster Risk Reduction Plans by 2025; and
  - b. To work with States, the private sector, investment and financial institutions and other relevant actors, to develop policies, programmes, regulations and incentives, which recognize, respect and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including our right to FPIC to any action that affects our lands, territories or resources from 2020 to 2025.
- 3. Implement and promote a rights-based approach and access to and implementation of renewable energy development, for a just transition away from fossil fuels that respects our right of self-determination and our right to FPIC, through the following three actions:**
- a. Increase partnerships and scale-up implementation of the Right Energy Partnership (REP) to enable and accelerate the transition to resilient Indigenous Peoples' communities by ensuring access to renewable energy of at least 50 million Indigenous People by 2030, and 200 million by 2050, to contribute to climate mitigation and adaptation; and support our sustainable livelihoods, equitable economic development and reduce poverty and hunger, among others.
  - b. Develop innovative and adaptive solutions, drawing on the sharing and valuing of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems to strengthen our resilience to climate change by 2030;



- c. Work with States, and other partners, to ensure a strong focus on equity, social justice, gender and youth involvement in all actions for a just transition, to enhance our sustainability and protection of our identities and dignities, with special attention to the role of Indigenous traditional food producers, knowledge holders, as well as those living with disabilities, by 2030 and 2050.

### **These Commitments and Actions will have the following impacts:**

- Increase the amount of protected Indigenous lands, resources, and territories, contributing to the restoration of biocultural diversity and the sequestration of carbon to reduce carbon emissions.
- Generate sustainable, localized, and nature-based economies to protect Indigenous Peoples traditional lifeways, food sovereignty, water sovereignty, and cultural transmission that will benefit our communities and humanity.
- Strengthen Indigenous Peoples' climate resilience and adaptation by increasing the effectiveness of climate solutions on the ground.
- Effective climate solutions including disaster prevention and response with the use of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems in combination with scientific knowledge.

### **To fulfill our commitments, Indigenous Peoples require the following:**

- Full and effective implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, ensuring the recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights to lands, territories and resources by States.
- Implementation of the States' human rights obligations and a halt to the criminalization of Indigenous Peoples; provision of effective access to justice including strict regulations on activities of the private sector affecting Indigenous Peoples' lands, territories and resources.
- Full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, including Indigenous youth, women, persons living with disabilities, traditional food producers and knowledge holders, in all climate action, including in the formulation and enhancement of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and relevant processes at the national, regional and global levels.
- Strong Global ambition, commitment, and action to keep global warming under 1.5 °C degrees in accordance with the Paris Agreement, including the full implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Platform.
- Partnerships with States and other stakeholders at all levels to financial, political, and policy support for the implementation of the long-term plan of Indigenous Peoples for Climate Action (such support includes, but is not limited to, financial/economic, legal/political, technical and access to appropriate technologies; participatory monitoring and data-disaggregation by ethnicity, etc.).
- Support independent global, regional and national convenings of Indigenous Peoples to strengthen our leadership, collective actions and contributions to climate solutions.
- Access to relevant information and ensure data disaggregation to adequately reflect Indigenous Peoples' conditions and contributions to climate change mitigation and



adaptation, as well as the impacts of state policies and actions on Indigenous Peoples.