

**International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB)**  
**SBSTTA 17**  
**Closing Statement**

Mr Chair,

The International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) began this week with a visit to the indigenous territory of the Mohawk people and inspired by our cultural exchange with the elders, adults and youth who were speaking their indigenous language and living their culture.

We also felt very encouraged about the work accomplished at the Eighth Meeting of the Working Group on Article 8j (WG8j-8) specifically the Global Plan of Action on Customary Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity with the objective to promote a just implementation of Article 10(c) on customary sustainable use at local, national, regional and international levels, while ensuring the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities at all stages and levels of its implementation.

The IIFB strongly feels that Strategic Goal E: Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building is cross-cutting to ALL Working Groups within the CBD, including SBSTTA.

As we reflect on the methodology used this week and the degree of our inclusion in the discussions, the IIFB will leave Montreal feeling disappointed about our experience at SBSTTA. The implementation of the Strategic Plan for biodiversity 2011-2020 cannot be achieved without the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities at all levels. Much has been accomplished over the past several years for the more equitable inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in biodiversity work. We do not want to see this undone or dismissed. This SBSTTA has left us having to present at the end of the session with a one minute intervention, being advised that our longer intervention would be posted on the website rather than considered in session, and being excluded from other discussions.

Mr. Chair, we do understand this process, and are working with Parties to gain support for our proposals. We believe we have shown discipline on our interventions, and respect the prerogatives of the Parties. A true dialogue comes from give and take among all relevant Parties. As the oldest conservationists on earth, we have important views and knowledge to share about our indigenous science and technology related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Unless improved, this process is not the definition of full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities and we are not convinced that this format will assist in successfully achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Mr. Chair, despite our disappointment, the IIFB, a network of Indigenous Peoples and local communities from the 7 regions of the world remain committed to the work ahead, continuing the dialogue, and collaborating with Parties, other Governments, UN agencies,

and others at all levels of work- internationally, regionally, nationally, and more importantly locally with respect, understanding, and transparency.