

**International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change
(IIPFCC)
Open Statement on the Green Climate Fund (GCF)
UNFCCC COP18/CMP8, Doha, Qatar
7 December 2012**

We, indigenous peoples' representatives present in Doha at COP18, wish to express our views and demands with reference to the Green Climate Fund.

First of all, we wish to underline the potential role that indigenous peoples can play in any climate-related policy and program and the imperative to adopt and implement a rights-based approach to climate financing, in accordance with international standards and commitments, such as those enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge, livelihoods and sustainable resource management and use provide key contributions to mitigation and adaptation.

Second, as agreed in the Cancun Agreements, any climate-related activity should not harm indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups. This means that the Green Climate Fund, its operations and activities should be informed by a rights-based approach that would prevent any negative consequence of climate change policies and programmes on the rights of indigenous peoples. We are pleased to see that the Governing Instrument of the GCF does have a section on Safeguards (Section X) and on Accountability (Section X1).

Thirdly, our right to participation has been recognized both at the UNFCCC level, and in various funds and climate related initiatives such as the Climate Investment Fund, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the FCPF (Forest Carbon Partnership Facility) and UN-REDD Collaborative Programme. We have representatives who sit as observers in the decision-making bodies of these entities. While we seek more improvements for our full and effective participation in these bodies, such arrangements are good starting points. To us, full and effective participation means the recognition of indigenous peoples as rights holders and as a separate constituency, the right to timely access to culturally-appropriate information, the right to be consulted and to attend meetings of decision-making bodies, with the right to speak and actively engage.

We welcome the commitment of the Board to discuss these matters in the upcoming Board meetings in 2013 and provide additional elements to that purpose.

A. FULL AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AS ACTIVE OBSERVERS

We wish to express our concern about the modalities currently practiced by the Board in terms of civil society and indigenous peoples' participation and consultation. Indigenous peoples' representatives have attended the first two

Board meetings, sharing views and concerns with a wide range of civil society organizations and NGOs with reference to the current working mode and future policy discussions meant to provide the GCF with the framework and institutional architecture needed to start its operations. Pending the adoption of a clear and effective policy on stakeholders' and rightsholders' engagement, our chances and opportunities to actively engage with the Board since the very beginning of its operations have been limited. Not only have Indigenous Peoples not been recognized as active observers, nor as a separate constituency, as is the case in other climate funds, but our opportunities to attend the Board meetings and to access the necessary documentation to inform our contribution and position have been either denied or reduced. Active observer status is granted only to two civil society representatives and two private sector representatives. Indigenous Peoples cannot be represented by either of these categories. We can only represent ourselves and we cannot accept to continue being excluded in this process.

This is a matter of serious concern for us and for the future activities of the Board and the GCF alike. Hence our first call to the Board, and to Member governments is to adopt, as a matter of urgency, a policy that would allow active participation of indigenous peoples and other constituencies in the activities of the Board, and relevant subcommittees, in line with internationally recognized standards and practices. Therefore, we, demand that Indigenous Peoples be granted positions as active observers in line with international human rights instruments and standards and in accordance with decision 3/CP (FCCC/CP/2011/9/Add.1).

a. A Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Board

A Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Advisory Body should be established as well as an indigenous peoples contact person to guarantee the active engagement of Indigenous Peoples in the decision-making processes so as to ensure ownership and success of GCF activities. The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues should participate in the Board meetings as an official observer to the GCF.

b. Dedicated financing to support participation

Furthermore, the Green Climate Fund Board should provide dedicated financing for IPs' participation to enable the full and effective participation in GCF activities, starting with support for the self-selection process to identify indigenous peoples' representatives at the Green Climate Fund. In line with what is being done by other climate funds we also propose that the GCF support regional level dialogues with indigenous peoples that would feed in into a global dialogue as is the case currently with the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility.

B. SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS

The Board working agenda for 2013 includes some crucial items such as the development and adoption of social and environmental safeguards, a recourse

mechanism, evaluation procedures, as well as modalities for direct access to financing. In our view these can be fundamental tools to help ensure that the operations and activities of the Green Climate Fund are respect and protect our our rights and respond to our needs.

a. Rights-based social and environmental safeguards for GCF policies, programmes and actions

As far as safeguards are concerned, these have to be based on international standards and instruments such as the UNDRIP and the ILO Convention 169. More specifically, safeguards should include the following elements among others: right to Free Prior Informed Consent right to redress and compensation for any harm inflicted as a consequence of GCF policies, programmes and actions, rights to land, territories and natural resources, right to traditional knowledge and practices, rights to self determination and the exercise of customary laws, governance and customary land use and forest management, right to law enforcement and conflict resolution through traditional governance systems, with local monitoring and reporting of infringements, and the right to equitable benefit sharing.

b. a safeguards compliance framework and grievance mechanism

Safeguards should be linked to a compliance framework, that includes a system of information on how safeguards are implemented, based on effective performance indicators, the opportunity for indigenous peoples to contribute with their own monitoring, reporting and verification models, and the existence of an independent, accessible and effective recourse mechanism. The Accountability Chapter of the Governing Instrument of the GCF calls for information disclosure and the establishment of a grievance mechanism. We urge the members of the Board to elaborate and adopt a Safeguard Policy on Indigenous Peoples which does not fall below the standards enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Other policies which should be established are a gender policy, environmental standard policy and an information disclosure policy. We also urge you to establish the grievance mechanism which can receive and act on complaints from indigenous peoples and communities which are adversely affected by projects funded by the GCF.

C. DIRECT ACCESS TO FUNDING FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Last but not least, direct access currently refers to national governments and the ability of accredited national implementing entities to access the funds. There are strong benefits for creating a similar specific finance facility under the GCF to enable indigenous peoples, to have direct access to dedicated funds that would strengthen the contributions of indigenous and local knowledge to climate change adaptation and mitigation and would support self-determined development. This facility will also provide direct access to women and local communities. We therefore call on the Green Climate Fund Board and member governments to establish a Small Grants Facility that will allow for indigenous peoples, women, local communities to have direct access to dedicated financing to implement mitigation and adaptation projects. This can build upon

and can further improve on existing mechanisms for participation in various climate change programs such as the FCFP (Forest Carbon Partnership Facility) and the FIP (Forest Investment Programme), Small Grants Facility of the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) as well as in UN bodies such as the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

We urge you, the members of the Board of the Green Climate Fund, to consider all these points as you shape your Business Model and further elaborate on what is in your Governing Instrument. We look forward to more fruitful dialogues with you and we hope to see results in terms of the integration of our proposals in your deliberations and decisions.