

Statement of Indigenous Peoples Calling for the Adoption of the Indigenous Peoples Policy during the 19th Meeting of the Board of the Green Climate Fund

14 February 2018

Distinguished Board Members,

After a long process of elaboration and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, the final draft of the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy is now in the agenda of your B19 meeting for consideration and approval, together with two other key policies, the ESMS and the new Gender and Social Inclusion Policy. At the same time, you will be discussing the approval of 23 projects, at least one third of which directly or indirectly have the potential to affect Indigenous Peoples. A random look at the projects in the pipeline for consideration and elaboration also confirms the need for a cogent policy on indigenous peoples to be adopted as a matter of urgency.

Initially slated for consideration and approval at B17 and then postponed to B18 and now to B19 due to a full agenda of the Board, the Indigenous Peoples Policy of the GCF has now undergone three stages of elaboration and inputs from stakeholders. Well aware of its importance, we have dedicated a substantial amount of time and energy to share the subsequent drafts of the Policy with our constituencies and solicit comments and inputs in order to contribute to ensure a wide discussion where a plurality of perspectives of indigenous peoples could be taken into due account.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Board for its support to develop the Policy and to the GCF Secretariat for its efforts to integrate our concerns and proposed elements of the Policy in the three drafts, including the most recent version, that is now for discussion at B19.

The three principles we have developed and adopted for our approach to climate finance are as follows:

- Do no harm – climate change policies and programs should not cause harm to indigenous peoples. Hence, a system of safeguards and subsequent compliance and accountability and monitoring framework should be put in place;
- Do good – the positive role and contribution of indigenous peoples as key actors in climate mitigation and adaptation, and historical stewards of ecological balance and fragile ecosystems should be recognized formally and practically, by envisaging modalities for direct access to finance the capacity to design, develop and implement projects based on their traditional knowledge, practices and innovations and low-carbon, sustainable traditional livelihoods;
- The full and effective participation of indigenous peoples at all levels, from the institutional level, in decision making, to the field level. This means, among others, the recognition of indigenous peoples as a single constituency, as the case is, under the UNFCCC and in many of the climate funds (but not yet at the GCF), of their status as active observers (this is not yet the case at the GCF). In addition, the identification of functions that would allow indigenous peoples to be duly considered, such as Indigenous Peoples Focal Points at Secretariat level, or in the upper management. In practical terms, this would also entail the

adoption of tailored guidance and tools to ensure that indigenous peoples fully and effectively participate in decision making, and project and program identification design, implementation, appraisal and monitoring.

We have reiterated these principles and specific proposals for the GCF Indigenous Policy in a statement published in April 2017 and signed by as many as 105 indigenous peoples' organizations and support groups.¹ The elements contained therein are defined and identified in the proposed Policy that we urge you to discuss and approve as scheduled at B19.

Once adopted, this Policy will represent a significant achievement and a high-quality benchmark for climate finance at large. Further elaboration of methodologies for implementation, such as Operational Guidelines, a guidance on Free, Prior and Informed Consent, and the development and adoption of the Fund's ESS will offer additional opportunities for refining key aspects that the Policy as such could not delve in detail. Additional work will be needed to harmonize other key GCF policies such as the ESMS, the ESS or the REDD+ Scorecard, and we confirm our willingness to contribute as we did this far.

We have been elaborating our asks and proposals to the GCF and also engaged with the Fund at various levels on the basis of our living experience with climate change impacts, our engagement in various climate funds and in the UNFCCC negotiations. We have been and are still working with partners, Funds, and international organizations, and engaging with governments to develop and implement solid, coherent approaches to climate change that are up to the daunting task of contributing to adaptation and mitigation. And we have also been first-hand witnesses of the possible negative repercussions of badly-designed programmes and projects, and suffered their impacts on our rights and lives and on the ecosystems we depend upon--the same ecosystems that are so crucial for climate adaptation and mitigation and that we manage according to our traditional knowledge systems and livelihoods.

This is why we look at the GCF as a potential tool to implement truly transformative, innovative and community-based approaches to climate change, that fully recognize the importance of respecting our rights.

¹ http://www.indigenousclimate.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=250%3Aan-indigenous-peoples-policy-for-the-gcf&catid=3%3Anews&lang=en

- a. *To support and promote the positive contributions of indigenous peoples to climate change mitigation and adaptation;*
- b. *To enable the critical role of indigenous peoples in assisting the Fund to achieve its transformational goals, with regard to more effective, sustainable and equitable climate change results, outcomes and impacts;*
- c. *To avoid and mitigate possible adverse impacts of the Fund's activities on indigenous peoples' rights, interests and well-being;*
- d. *To ensure the respect of the rights of indigenous peoples in the whole spectrum of the Fund's activities and initiatives, in full alignment with applicable international obligations and standards such as ILO Convention 169 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP);*
- e. *To recognize and respect in all activities financed by the Green Climate Fund, indigenous peoples' rights to collectively own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired;*
- f. *To recognize and effectively apply the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), in accordance with relevant international laws and standards, and international best practice principles; and*
- g. *To promote and ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples at all levels of the Fund's activities and initiatives.*

In the light of the above, we urge you to approve the proposed Policy in its current formulation at B19 without further delay.

Signed and supported by the following indigenous peoples organizations, IP networks, support groups and alliances and civil society organizations.

1. Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara/ Indigenous Peoples' Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN), Indonesia
2. Alianza Mujeres Indígenas por los Derechos Humanos y el Desarrollo Social AMIDES A.C., Peru
3. Asian Indigenous Women Network
4. Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD)
5. Center for Indigenous Peoples' Research and Development (CIPRED), Nepal
6. Center for International Environmental Law, USA
7. Center of Indigenous Cultures of Perú (CHIRAPAQ), Peru
8. Centre of Research and Development in Upland Areas (CERDA), Vietnam
9. Centro para la Autonomía y Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (CADPI), Nicaragua
10. Federación por la Autodeterminación de los Pueblos Indígenas (FAPI), Paraguay
11. Forest Peoples Programme, UK
12. Friends of the Earth, US
13. Heinrich Boell Stiftung North America
14. Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), Kenya
15. Institut Dayakologi, Indonesia
16. International Rivers
17. International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), Denmark
18. Kitanglad Integrated NGOs, Philippines
19. Lelewal, Cameroon
20. Mainyoto Pastoralists Integrated Development Organization (MPIDO), Kenya
21. Maleya Foundation, Bangladesh
22. Nación P'urhépecha Zapatista" (Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas of México
23. Organización del Pueblo Guaraní – OPG, Paraguay
24. San Youth Network
25. SONIA for a Just New World, Italy
26. Tebtebba Foundation (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education)
27. Third World Network