



Juergen Voegele
Vice President
Sustainable Development

December 8, 2020

Mr. Liu Zhenmin
Office of the Under-Secretary-General
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Room S-2922, UN Secretariat Building
New York, New York 10017

Dear Mr. Zhenmin,

Thank you for your letter dated November 11, 2020 inviting the World Bank to contribute to the twentieth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), which will be held from April 19 to the 30th, 2021. We look forward to participating in the sessions focused on advancing the theme of "Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16", as well as side events and other discussions on the Forum's agenda.

The World Bank continues to work to support Indigenous peoples' inclusion and development with our client countries through policy dialogue and institutional strengthening, programmatic and investment lending, and technical assistance and analytical work. In several regions of the world, we also work with Indigenous peoples directly through ongoing dialogue on how to improve their inclusion in the Bank portfolio, financing for their development priorities (through lending to governments), analytical work, and trust funds.

One of the primary ways the Bank supports the inclusion and development priorities of Indigenous peoples is through our Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), which includes Environmental and Social Standard 7 (ESS7) which is entitled: Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities. This Standard, which became effective on October 1, 2018, is currently being applied in 33 percent of our active investment portfolio and replaced the World Bank's former Indigenous Peoples Policy (OP 4.10). For projects potentially benefiting or affecting Indigenous peoples, ESS7 requires meaningful consultation, or free, prior, and informed consent (depending on the scope of impacts), with the affected or beneficiary Indigenous peoples and their representatives. Based on these consultations



and a social assessment of potential impacts and benefits, a specific set of actions or processes are agreed with the affected or beneficiary Indigenous peoples and/or their representatives through the adoption of the Project's Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) or Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF). Through this Standard, and previously through the Bank's Indigenous Peoples Policy, the Bank is working across a broad range of investments to ensure that Indigenous peoples participate in the benefits derived from Bank-financed projects and that adverse impacts are adequately avoided or mitigated.

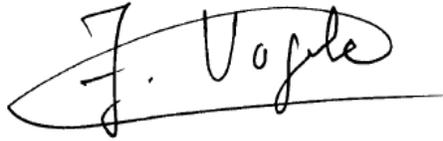
Beyond the ESF, over the past years, the World Bank has also been strengthening its direct dialogue and financing for Indigenous peoples' priorities, for which we provide some examples here. In the sphere of investment lending, the World Bank approved two new investment projects co-designed with Indigenous peoples for \$80m in Panama (2018) and \$40m in Ecuador (2020). In East Asia, the Bank is supporting Community Driven Development (CDD) loans focused on ethnic minority communities in Vietnam and Lao PDR. Policy lending for COVID-19 response and recovery in Guatemala and Panama supported legal reforms proposed by Indigenous peoples for almost a decade. Technical assistance is underway in India to support improved service delivery in tribal areas, and similar support is underway in Kenya. Trust funds administered by the World Bank, totaling approximately \$120m in forestry and climate change have made significant contributions to strengthening Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) direct benefits, capacity and meaningful participation in climate change and REDD+ dialogues and projects. The Dedicated Grant Mechanism, financed under the Forest Investment Program, has mobilized \$80m for grants designed and led directly by IPLCs in 12 countries. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) is supporting \$15m to build IPLCs capacity and support their meaningful participation in REDD+ and climate change dialogues. Most recently, the new approved Enhancing Access to Benefits while Lowering Emissions (EnABLE) Trust Fund, with an initial amount of \$24.5m will contribute to the inclusion of IPLCs and other marginalized people's participation in the benefits generated from emission reduction programs.

In light of COVID-19, the World Bank leveraged ongoing partnerships with Indigenous organizations to prepare assessments of impacts and proposals for recovery in 11 countries in Latin America and East Asia. These reports directly informed our response and recovery projects, facilitating the implementation of our commitment to protect the poor and most vulnerable in our COVID-19 response. Direct dialogue with Indigenous peoples at global, regional and national levels continue to inform and strengthen the Bank's broader vision for development and our ability to ensure that Indigenous peoples rights are respected and promoted through our work.

This year, the World Bank nominated a new global coordinator for Indigenous peoples who works closely with Indigenous peoples' focal points from all the region's that the World Bank works in. This team is carrying out a global stocktaking exercise to better understand the situation of Indigenous peoples in each country and how the Bank can best leverage its knowledge, policy dialogue and investment lending to contribute to Indigenous peoples' voice, inclusion and resilience.

We look forward to participating actively in the 2021 UNPFII where we hope to share details from our relevant work program, as well as have the opportunity to listen and dialogue with other Institutions and participating Government and Indigenous peoples.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J. Voegelé". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping underline that extends to the left and right.

Juergen Voegele
Vice President
Sustainable Development

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