

**Tenth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on
Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)**

**Contribution by the United Nations Framework Convention on
Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

February 2011

Summary

The Climate Change Secretariat provides here an update of relevant activities of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), particularly those undertaken since the ninth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). We report on i) general implementation of relevant recommendations of the ninth session of UNPFII. We also highlight progress in relation to (ii) the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action of the UNFCCC; and (iii) enhancing participation of indigenous peoples in the Climate Change Convention.

1. Recommendations of the ninth session of UNPFII

As with other processes, implementation of recommendations of the Permanent Forum relevant to the UNFCCC will be guided primarily by the mandate given by Parties. Furthermore, the commitment of the President of Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC on specific issues can also play a role. In this respect, the COP 16/CMP 6 Presidency made substantial efforts in reaching out to and fostering dialogue with indigenous people in the lead up to and during COP 16/CMP 6.

Relevant UNFCCC processes are also supported by the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives who are largely from indigenous NGOs admitted as observer organizations. While the Climate Change Secretariat does not have a focal point on indigenous issues it has in the last year enhanced staffing in its Observer Organization Liaison Office to meet and respond appropriately to the general increase of enquiries and demand from observers.

2. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action of the
UNFCCC

Recommendation 13 of the Report of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its ninth session in 2010:

"The Permanent Forum recognizes the importance of indigenous peoples knowledge systems as the basis of their development with culture and identity and therefore recommends the ongoing international processes, such as negotiations on the international regime on access and benefit-sharing of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term

Cooperative Action of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore of the World Intellectual Property Organization, should recognize and integrate the crucial role and relevance of indigenous knowledge systems in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

The UNFCCC secretariat is pleased to report significant progress regarding the implementation of recommendation 13 with the inclusion of many references to indigenous issues in the decision “Outcome of the work of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention” (hereafter referred to as “decision -/CP.16 on the AWG-LCA outcome”) adopted at COP16/CMP 6 held in Cancun, 28 November - 10 December 2010.

Relevant excerpts from decision -/CP.16 on the AWG-LCA outcome are set out in full in the annex to this report. Below is a summary of these:

- Preamble: makes reference to resolution 10/4 of the United Nations Human Rights Council on ‘human rights and climate change’, recognizing, among others, indigenous as a segment of the population already vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

- Part I: “A shared vision for long-term cooperative action”, paragraph 7, recognizes the importance of effective participation of indigenous peoples.

- Part II: “Enhanced action on adaptation”, paragraph 12, recognizes the role of traditional and indigenous knowledge.

- Part III: “Enhanced action on mitigation”, section C. “Policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation to developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries”, paragraph 72, refers to ensuring the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders when developing and implementing national strategies and action plans, specifically highlighting indigenous peoples and local communities.

- Part III: “Enhanced action on mitigation”, section E “Economic and social consequences of response measures”, includes a preambular reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

- Appendix 1: “Guidance and safeguards for policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries”, paragraph 2, notes that, when undertaking the relevant activities set out in paragraph 70 of the decision, the following safeguards should be promoted and supported:

- “Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities” (paragraph 2 (c)).
- “The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities” in actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 (paragraph 2 (d)).
- (Consistency with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity)(paragraph 2 (e)) “Taking into account the need for sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities and their interdependence on forests in most countries, reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the International Mother Earth Day.” (footnote 1).

3. Enhancing participation of indigenous peoples in the Climate Change Convention

COP 16/CMP 6 further adopted a decision titled “Progress in, and ways to enhance, the implementation of the amended New Delhi work programme on Article 6 of the Convention” according to which Parties are invited to undertake a number of actions to enhance the implementation of the amended New Delhi work programme (decision 9/CP.13), regarding climate change education, training and public awareness. One of the actions listed relates to fostering the participation of indigenous peoples (amongst other groups) in decision-making on climate change at the national level and their attendance at intergovernmental meetings, including sessions of the Conference of the Parties, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the subsidiary bodies (paragraph 2 (e)).

Furthermore, among the recommendations agreed upon by participants to the regional workshop on the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention in small island developing States (November 2010), there is one regarding the provision of incentives for indigenous people (amongst other groups) to participate in the formulation and implementation of efforts to address climate change (document FCCC/SBI/2010/22, paragraph 61 (j)). Moreover, the participants to the regional workshop on the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention in Latin America and the Caribbean (April 2010) noted that improved reporting on activities related to Article 6 through national communications would also require national coordinating mechanisms, which would include indigenous people (amongst other groups) to coordinate the reporting process and share best practices and main challenges in the implementation of activities related to Article 6 (document FCCC/SBI/2010/9, paragraph 61 (b)).

Annex: Relevant excerpts from decision -/CP.16 on the AWG-LCA outcome (emphasis in bold added):

Preamble

Noting resolution 10/4 of the United Nations Human Rights Council on 'human rights and climate change', which recognizes that the adverse effects of climate change have a range of direct and indirect implications for the effective enjoyment of human rights and that the effects of **climate change will be felt most acutely** by those **segments of the population that are already vulnerable owing to** geography, gender, age, **indigenous** or minority status, or disability.

I. Shared vision for long-term cooperative action

7. *Recognizes* the need to **engage a broad range of stakeholders** at global, regional, national and local levels, be they government, including subnational and local government, private business or civil society, including youth and persons with disability, and that gender equality and the **effective participation of women and indigenous peoples** are important for effective action on all aspects of climate change.

II. Enhanced action on adaptation

12. *Affirms* that **enhanced action on adaptation** should be undertaken in accordance with the Convention; should follow a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems; and should be **based on and guided by** the best available science and, **as appropriate, traditional and indigenous knowledge**; with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions, where appropriate.

III. Enhanced action on mitigation

C. Policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation to developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries

72. *Also requests* developing country Parties, when developing and implementing their **national strategies or action plans**, to address, inter alia, the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, land tenure issues, forest governance issues, gender considerations and the safeguards identified in paragraph 2 of appendix I to this decision, **ensuring the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, inter alia, indigenous peoples and local communities**.

E. Economic and social consequences of response measures

Preamble

Taking note of relevant provisions of the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**.

Appendix 1

Guidance and safeguards for policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries

2. When undertaking the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision, the following safeguards should be promoted and supported:

(c) **Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities**, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**.

(d) The **full and effective participation** of relevant stakeholders, in particular, **indigenous and local communities**, in the actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision.

(e) That actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forest and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits.

Footnote 1 to paragraph 2(e): Taking into account the **need for sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities** and their interdependence on forests in most countries, reflected in the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, as well as the International Mother Earth Day.