

# Summary

Informal meeting with the chairmanship of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Principles, Standards and Modalities for Support to Indigenous Peoples

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August at 9 AM (NYC)

## Participants

Dario Mejia Montalvo (Chairperson, UNPFII), Phoolman Chaudhary (member, UNPFII,) Aleksei Tsykarev (member, UNPFII), Xiaoan Zhang (miembra, UNPFII), Rosemary Lane (SPFII) Mirian Masaquiza (SPFII), Birgitte Feiring (Charapa Consult), Albert Barume (Charapa Consult)

## Background

The meeting was organised to allow members of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) to:

- Obtain information about the Pledge to support the tenure rights and forest guardianship of indigenous peoples.
- Obtain information about the Process to assess principles, standards and mechanisms to support the tenure rights and forest guardianship of indigenous peoples.
- Know the key messages identified through the regional workshops with indigenous representatives.
- Give observations regarding the Pledge and the Assess for evaluating principles, standards and mechanisms.

## Summary:

**Dario Mejia Montalvo** opened the meeting, underlining that the UNPFII, at the 2022 Session, had discussed funding to indigenous peoples, including the Pledge to increase funding to enhance climate action that was launched at COP 26.

Studies have shown that less than 1% of international climate finance reaches indigenous peoples. The Pledge comes with a perspective to fund indigenous peoples in particular ecosystems (forests) but climate change affects all indigenous peoples. Hence, there is a need to discuss funding for indigenous peoples in all 7 regions of the world, and the UNPFII extends an invitation to donors and others to discuss funding and strategies that do not fraction indigenous peoples according to e.g. specific ecosystems. Similarly, there is a need to ensure that climate finance does not generate increased dependency on intermediaries. The UNPFII will also look deeper into the issue of funding within the UN-system, including through a study undertaken by members of the Forum.

**Birgitte Feiring** gave a brief introduction to the Pledge and to the assessment process facilitated by Charapa Consult. She highlighted the following issues:

- The Pledge of 1.7 billion USD to indigenous peoples and local communities comes with a commitment to promote the effective participation and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in decision-making and to partner with them in the design and implementation of programmes and finance instruments.
- The process facilitated by Charapa Consult is an attempt to assess standards, principles and modalities for best supporting indigenous peoples' tenure rights and forest guardianship, in a participatory manner.
- So far, around 200 indigenous peoples' organisations have participated in events and workshops and have formulated recommendations to donors. Moreover, more than 100 organisations have contributed to data collection about their experiences with funding through an on-line questionnaire.
- Information about the process and summaries of key conclusions and recommendations are available at [www.charapa.dk](http://www.charapa.dk)

The assessment process reaffirms the stark contrast between the crucial role of indigenous peoples in conserving biodiversity and combating climate change, and the negligible fraction of climate funding that reaches them. Very few indigenous peoples' organisations receive funding directly from donors; most funds are channeled through intermediaries, which increase transaction costs.

Some of the key conclusions and recommendations put forward by indigenous peoples are:

- Indigenous peoples must be considered partners and not beneficiaries in the context of climate finance
- There is a need for a holistic approach to funding, including all indigenous peoples in all ecosystems and address indigenous peoples' own priorities and aspirations for self-determined development
- The diversity of country contexts must be taken into account
- Funding must follow a rights-based approach, based on UNDRIP, including the requirement for consultation, participation in decision making and consent by indigenous peoples' representative institutions
- The aim is to secure long-term predictable funding aligned with indigenous peoples' priorities and aspirations
- There is a strong preference for direct funding to indigenous peoples' organisations or funding mechanisms
- If intermediaries are necessary, the decision-making must remain with indigenous peoples
- There is a need for different types of grants to cater for increasing capacities and a need for flexibilisation, simplification and harmonisation of requirements
- Funding should be accompanied with capacity-building and mentoring
- Special considerations and measures should ensure inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities

In order to strengthen dialogue, transparency and accountability in the context of the Pledge, there is a broad consensus among indigenous peoples about the following recommendations:

- Align funding commitments with general support for the promotion and protection of indigenous peoples' rights
- Establish a mechanism for continuous dialogue and engagement of indigenous peoples with the Pledge donors
- Disclose information about contributions and allocations under the Pledge
- Establish a monitoring mechanism to follow the commitments under the Pledge with direct participation of indigenous peoples
- Organise mutual capacity-building of donors and indigenous leaders
- Support a global platform for exchange among indigenous peoples, including necessary resources to do consultations and outreach at different levels (local, national and regional)

**Albert Barume** highlighted that the recommendations put forward by indigenous peoples would be relevant and useful for broader reflections about the enhancing funding to indigenous peoples, beyond the specific context of the Pledge.

**Mirian Masaquiza** stressed the need for donors to consult with those indigenous peoples' organisations that are representative of the holders of lands and territories, and the need for continuous consultation, participation and consent, as enshrined in the UNDRIP and ILO Convention No. 169. There is a historical background to the support to indigenous peoples from NGOs and intermediaries. What tools can be applied in the current situation to measure the support of intermediaries to indigenous peoples' self-determination?

**Dario Mejia Montalvo** noted that although the assessment process facilitated by Charapa Consult does not provide advice to donors on where to allocate their funds, the processes cannot be entirely separated. What happens globally, also affect indigenous peoples in specific regions. When donors do not distinguish between indigenous peoples and local communities, it weakens accountability as it becomes even more difficult to see how the rights enshrined in the UNDRIP are being promoted through the funding. UNDRIP must be the legal framework for any support to indigenous peoples. Likewise, funding should be aligned with long-term goals, based on the UNDIRP. We need to establish long-term goals for how funding can minimize dependency on intermediaries and enhance self-determination, administrative and territorial autonomy etc. This will require specific objectives and indicators in the short, the medium and the long-term, to measure how funding under the Pledge contributes to these objectives.

**Mirian Masaquiza** highlighted the need to explain donors how to align their funding with indigenous peoples' rights, including by providing concrete recommendations for promoting ratifications of ILO Convention No. 169 and the Escazú Treaty, providing support to existing funding mechanisms for indigenous peoples, such as the Trust Fund for Indigenous Peoples, and by providing political support to indigenous peoples in international processes and negotiations.

**Albert Barume** concluded that there is a need for strategic investment in indigenous peoples' issues, and that the Pledge could have a transformative impact if it provides for strong partnerships between donors and indigenous peoples.