



Asia Report on **Climate Change** and Indigenous Peoples

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Copyright Year-2015



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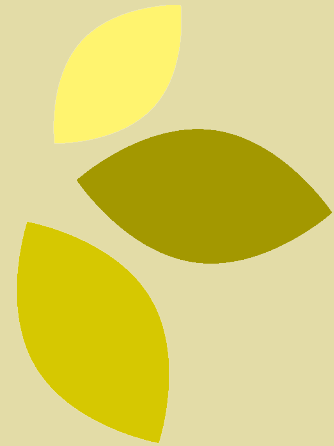
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Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)
108 Moo 5, Tambon Sanpranate, Amphoe Sansai
Chiang Mai 50210 Thailand
Tel: +66(0)533380168
Fax: +66(0)533380752

Writers: Joan Carling, Jill Carino and Lakpa Nuri Sherpa

Layout: AIPP Printing Press

Photo Credit: Puah Sze Ning, Shafie Dris and Yang Mingfeng



This report is produced with the support from Norwegian Government.

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Printed by: AIPP Printing Press Co., Ltd
www.aippprinting.com



European Union

The printing press has been established with support from the European Union's European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights



AIPP PRINTING PRESS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This regional report was based on the country reports submitted by the following organisations:

1. Adivasi Mahila Maha Sang (AMMS), India
2. Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (AMAN), Indonesia
3. Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association (CIYA), Cambodia
4. Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO), Myanmar
5. Center for Sustainable Development in the Mountainous Areas (CSDM), Vietnam
6. Gender Development Association (GDA), Lao PDR
7. Indigenous peoples Foundation for Education and Environment, Thailand
8. Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia (JOAS), Malaysia
9. Kapaeeng Foundation, Bangladesh
10. NGO Federation of Nepalese Indigenous Nationalities, Nepal
11. Nepal Federation of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines (KAMP), The Philippines
12. TARA-Ping Pu, Taiwan/China

The country reports were prepared as part of the national consultations of indigenous peoples and dialogues with governments in relation to indigenous peoples' preparations for the twenty first session of the Conference of Parties (COP21) to be held in Paris. These reports were also presented and enriched during the Asia indigenous peoples regional preparatory meeting for COP21 and beyond.

AIPP fully acknowledges these contributions of organizations and participants to the national and regional preparatory meetings for the COP21.

AIPP also acknowledges and appreciates the financial support provided by the Norwegian government not only for the preparatory meetings but also for the participation and related activities of indigenous peoples to COP21 and beyond. The support and assistance provided by UNDP in this process is also much appreciated.

INTRODUCTION

This report is a summary of national reports of indigenous peoples from 12 countries in Asia and the results of the regional preparatory meeting of Asia indigenous peoples for the 21st Session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP21). This regional preparatory meeting, which was organized by Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) on September 16-18, 2015 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, was participated by 30 selected indigenous peoples' representatives coming from Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Thailand, Lao PDR, Taiwan/China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines and Vietnam, including representatives of regional networks of indigenous women, indigenous youth and indigenous persons with disabilities.

The report compiles key issues related to the impacts of climate change on indigenous peoples, including impacts of purported solutions to climate change, in view of the particular context and experiences of indigenous peoples. It looks into a number of States' action plans to address climate change, and how these measures are relevant, appropriate and/or inclusive of the participation of indigenous peoples. Adaptation strategies and mitigation practices of indigenous peoples to increase community resilience and reduce further vulnerability to climate change have been highlighted at multiple levels. A cross-cutting theme in the report is the application of indigenous knowledge, values, practices and innovations in addressing climate change. Finally, recommendations of Asian indigenous peoples are forwarded for consideration by policy-makers during the upcoming COP21 in Paris and beyond for genuine and meaningful solutions to the climate crisis.



Participants of the regional preparatory meeting of Asia Indigenous Peoples in Chiang Mai, Thailand

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The impacts of climate change are severe for at least 260 million indigenous peoples in Asia. The effects of warming temperature, extreme weather events, unpredictable seasons and sea level rise include loss of lives and property, loss of traditional livelihoods, food insecurity, environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity and related indigenous knowledge systems and practices, worsening health problems and disruption of indigenous communities' social and cultural life.

While States are obliged to come up with National Action Plans to address the issue of climate change, it appears that not all governments in Asia have developed plans, policies and measures towards decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing their citizenry to adapt to the consequences of climate change. Moreover, there are hardly any programs directed at the particular problems and situations faced by indigenous peoples in relation to climate change. Much less can you find meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in the formulation of government plans and strategies addressing climate change. Many Asian States still fail to fully recognize indigenous peoples and to acknowledge their valuable contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Meanwhile, measures aimed at mitigating climate change such as Clean Development Mechanisms have had severe adverse impacts on indigenous peoples. Purported solutions that states or corporations are offering in response to climate change are turning out to be false solutions that harm the environment, violate indigenous peoples rights and undermine the welfare of communities. Among the proposed solutions to climate change is the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the UNFCCC, whereby emission-reduction projects in developing countries can earn certified emission reduction credits. Essentially, CDM is an emissions trading mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol, whereby industrialized countries (Annex 1 countries) with greenhouse gas reduction commitments can invest in emissions reduction ventures in developing countries as a cheaper alternative and to avoid reducing their emissions in their own countries. Among the methodologies included under



the CDM are projects such as biofuels, renewable energy projects such as dams, afforestation and reforestation, carbon capture and storage, shift in transportation means such as high speed railway systems, among many others. The impacts of CDM projects implemented in indigenous peoples' territories have been disastrous for many communities, who have experience land grabbing, displacement and food insecurity.

At the same time, indigenous peoples have developed coping and adaptation strategies to deal with the impacts of climate change, aside from sustaining their collective principles, values and worldviews on the conservation of the environment. Among the strategies that have helped them survive in the face of severe impacts of climate change are using indigenous crops and livestock, adjusting agricultural practices, diversifying livelihood activities and adopting climate-resilient native species and crop varieties. Another approach is improving and intensifying forest, watershed and water resources restoration, protection and conservation activities. The use of traditional science-based knowledge as well as traditional self-help methods, organizing indigenous peoples' organizations and collaboration with government have also enabled indigenous peoples cope with disasters and changing climate conditions.

In the upcoming COP21, indigenous peoples of Asia want to deliver a strong message for developed countries to be accountable for their responsibilities in the climate crisis. The global climate crisis is a result of the failure of a development model, which is contingent on using up natural resources with no consideration for sustainability and social equity. Corporate greed and control over resources have rendered national decision-makers powerless in the face of pressure from industrialised nations. It is thus urgent to reverse the course of development and to adhere to values of mutual support, collectivism, spirituality, subsistence and sustainability, which indigenous peoples have always subscribed to.

The main messages that indigenous peoples want to put across to States and Parties in COP21 are:

- 1) Indigenous peoples are not the problems but are part of the solutions to climate change.
- 2) Security of land, territories and resources of indigenous peoples is critical for effective climate change solutions.
- 3) Traditional knowledge systems of indigenous peoples are crucial in combatting climate change.
- 4) Indigenous peoples are not just vulnerable groups but self-governing peoples with collective rights who are vital actors in climate change negotiations and solutions.
- 5) It is essential to develop and support partnership with rights holders indigenous peoples in the fight against climate change. Partnership with indigenous peoples shall be based on the respect, recognition, protection and promotion of their collective rights.

Towards the end of decisively reducing Green House Gases (GHG) emissions, indigenous peoples in Asia are submitting a number of general and particular recommendations for consideration in COP 21 and beyond. One of the key recommendations is the full and effective consultation, participation, and Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of indigenous peoples in all negotiation processes, and in the design and implementation of measures related to climate change. Another call is that all solutions to address the effects of climate change must be respectful of indigenous peoples' rights and their traditional knowledge.

I. KEY IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ASIA

Asia is the most culturally diverse region in the world where at least 260 million indigenous peoples live. Asian indigenous peoples largely find homes in the mountains, hills, forests, coastal areas and small islands, where they live in close interdependence with the land, nature and its resources. They mostly live simple and sustainable lifestyles, inflicting minimal damage to the environment and leaving negligible carbon footprints. Indigenous peoples are thus counted among those who contribute the least to greenhouse gas emissions, which has been identified as the main cause of global warming and the changing climate. Yet indigenous peoples are severely impacted by and experience serious consequences due to climate change and its various manifestations.

Climate change is manifested in:

1. Warming temperature

Rise in temperature has been noted, with both days and nights observably warmer. As a result, glaciers are receding due to rapid snow and ice melting. For instance, a glacier in the Sagarmatha region in Nepal has receded 330 feet vertically in the past 90 years, causing expansion of and formation of new glacier lakes.

2. Extreme weather events

There is an alarming trend of extreme weather events each year such as stronger typhoons and intense drought. For instance, Taiwan/China and the Philippines faced the worst typhoons in the world in recent years. Meanwhile, Taiwan/China also experienced its worst drought in over a decade during the first half of this year (2015), registering the lowest precipitation during autumn and winter since 1947, necessitating a water-rationing program and affecting more than 500,000 indigenous households. Extreme weather is also seen in too dry and hot summers, too much rain during the rainy season and too cold winter seasons.

3. Changing and unpredictable seasons and weather patterns

Changing weather patterns are seen in longer droughts and changes in the annual rainfall cycle. Unpredictable and more intense rainfall is observed and the number of days with heavy rainfall is increasing. Vietnam saw the appearance of waves of abnormal deep freeze killing cattle and destroying crops of the people. In 2008, a historic cold spell lasting for 38 days killed thousands of cattle in the northern mountainous provinces of Vietnam.

4. Rise in sea water level

Rise in sea water level is seen in high level tide, causing erosion of beach and shoreline, inundation of coastal regions and soil salinity. For instance, studies indicate that much of Taiwan's shorelines are disappearing, especially in the western region of the island, under the impact of sea level rise and erosional forces.

Consequences and Impacts of Climate Change on Indigenous Peoples:

In recent months, Asian countries have experienced catastrophes related to climate change. These include flooding in Myanmar and Malaysia, super typhoons in the Philippines and Taiwan, China, drought in Thailand, among others. These serious incidents have resulted in greater food insecurity, destruction of livelihoods, lands and resources, displacement, serious health problems, increased number of indigenous peoples with disabilities and grave suffering for millions of indigenous peoples in Asia.



1. Loss of lives and property

The increase in climate-induced disasters such as landslides and floods has led to deaths, destruction of homes and damage to property. Important infrastructures have been submerged and destroyed, while transportation has been disrupted by floods and landslides causing isolation of indigenous communities.

At the end of December 2014, heavy rainfall caused historically unprecedented floods throughout the Peninsular Malaysia. Many indigenous communities were cut off by flood waters, requiring innovative methods to get food supplies in, such as this makeshift raft used by the indigenous Jahut people of Kuala Krau, Pahang

Taiwan Typhoon, Mountain Avalanche and Landslide

Wulai and Fuxing Tribes tragically drowned by Typhoon Soudelor

The Wulai Tribe is located in New Taipei Township in northern Taiwan. Fuxing Tribe is located in Fusing Township of Taoyuan in northern Taiwan. Both are a confluence of several indigenous Atayal clan groups, which have a strong indigenous tribal identity.

The Wulai Tribe community almost disappeared overnight when Typhoon Soudelor hit Taiwan in August 2015. International media and scientific agencies said Soudelor was the most powerful typhoon on earth so far this year.

The only access road from outside to Wulai Tribe at Kameyama station, and the road from Wulai Tribe to the nearby Fukuyama Tribe were all cut off due to multiple mountain avalanches and landslides from the typhoon's impact, isolating the Wulai Tribe in the mountains like an island. Among the Fuxing Tribes, one was hurt during the Typhoon Soudelor but 10 houses were buried. The people there have to find another safe place to reconstruct their houses to live in.

During the typhoon, about 2,100 people of the tribe were trapped in area. Due to communication difficulties, only about 100 people could be contacted at that time. Government agency and civilian rescue units headed into the mountains for search and rescue, while making urgent road repairs and air-drop supplies and other relief materials with helicopters.

News report footage captured the scenes of devastation, where a girl from the Wulai Tribe looked at her mother and asked: "When could we go home?" Her mother, Hu Meihua, wiped her tears to say, "We have no home to return to." Their home was buried in a pile of mud and rock debris.



2. Loss of traditional livelihoods resulting in food insecurity

Climate change has adversely affected the traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples such as subsistence agriculture, shifting cultivation, fishing, hunting and gathering. Agriculture has been greatly damaged due to floods, less rain or extreme temperatures, depleting food sources of livestock and indigenous peoples. The agricultural calendar is affected as it is difficult to predict weather for cultivation, planting and harvest, leading to deviations from traditional farming practices. These have impacts on crop production, such as poor harvest and destruction of farms, less cropping seasons, decreased crop yield due to unsynchronized planting and harvest, and crop damage due to increasing pest infestations (e.g. rats, giant earth worms). The handling of pests in crops has become more difficult and indigenous peoples have to spend more money for plant protection products. Changing patterns in the migration of birds also present difficulties for those indigenous peoples dependent on gathering bird's nests for livelihood.

Reduction of land area for planting, decreased soil fertility and susceptibility of crops to diseases have also been observed due to changing weather patterns. Example, flash floods in Tahirpur brought down small stones from the India into the arable lands of the Khasi people living in Sylhet, thereby causing damage to the productivity of food due to damage of the rice fields. Livestock are also affected by the appearance of new pests and diseases. Very hot periods have also led to death of domestic and farm animals and increased difficulty for farmers and farm animals to work in the fields. Lack of rainfall has dried up major water reservoirs and river streams, decreasing the volume of water for irrigation. With parched fields, many farmers are unable to undertake cultivation.

Increasingly prolonged drought has severely affected the crops and the prevention and fighting of forest fires of indigenous peoples in Vietnam. In recent years, droughts frequently occurred destroying the harvests and causing forest fires in large scale. Other forest-related problems include: erosion of mountains and forests due to landslides during typhoons and heavy rainfall; decrease in the population of forest animals, birds and bees; depletion of forest products such as honey, orchids and plants, bamboos and small trees for building and changes in the practice of swidden farming or shifting cultivation in forest areas.

For indigenous communities dependent on marine and river ecosystems, problems include: inability to go fishing during extreme weather events, such as typhoons and storm surge. Unpredictability of weather patterns put at risk the safety of fisher folk. Warmer seas disturb the condition of the marine ecosystem, causing destruction of corals and leading to decrease in fish catch. Many indigenous peoples who depend on fishery, harvest of intertidal fauna and other marine resources, have seen their livelihood dwindled. These included Taiwan's indigenous peoples living in coastal regions and offshore islands. Rise of water level and storm surges cause destruction of coastal communities, bringing fear and insecurity among the people. The combined effect of sea level rise and coastal land subsidence is the inland encroachment of seawater, leading to increased salinization of soil, and subsurface water. If the trend of coastal land subsidence, sea water and soil salinization are not reversed, much of fishery, aquaculture sector, and agriculture production of indigenous peoples in the lowland and coastal areas of Taiwan will be lost, with grave consequence for the survival of these communities.

Livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples in Myanmar affected by Climate Change

In Shan state, it has been reported the production of orange and potatoes has been reduced to 50% of its annual production despite the use of chemical fertilizers. Some years back, an enormous number of rats occupied the farmland and destroyed everything just before the harvesting period. During rainy season, farmers are afraid of thunder, which sometimes hit their field.

Varieties and numbers of vegetables and fishes have also been reduced and local residents sometimes cannot afford to buy some fish in the local market. In Rakhine state, numbers of jelly fishes and platu fish are reduced and kyuat-pann (stone flower) cannot be found anymore in their area.

3. Environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity, traditional knowledge and practices

Climate change has caused degradation of the environment and biodiversity loss, leading to the loss of related traditional knowledge and practices. Loss in biodiversity includes the loss of indigenous species of seeds and plants, decrease in aquatic animals, even deer and rabbits and some local medicinal plants can no longer be found in the forest. For instance, Himalayan medicinal herbs and plants are dying, with consequent impacts on traditional healing practices. Ecological agriculture in many indigenous areas has been hampered by the introduction of cash crops needing pesticides. For instance, monocrop plantations of trees like Acacia and Eucalyptus in the places of greater Mymensingh and Chittagong Hill Tracts have resulted in loss of biodiversity. Climate change further aggravates pre-existing environmental degradation due to extractive industries in indigenous communities such as mining, logging and mega-dams.

4. Worsening health problems

People's health is also affected with the emergence and rise in cases of new and infectious diseases and increasing number of flies and mosquitoes. There is an alarming increase in diseases associated with increasing temperatures and vector-borne and water-borne diseases like cholera, malaria and dengue fever. Extreme and unprecedented cold spells also result in health problems such as hypothermia, bronchitis and pneumonia, especially for the old and young. Changes in patterns of farming and fishing also bring health problems. For instance, excessive use of chemical fertilizers due to decreased soil fertility and falling production levels in some areas has proven harmful to farmers' health.

5. Disruption of indigenous community's social life

Social-cultural changes are observed such as migration and forced relocation due to natural disasters resulting from climate change. Furthermore, climate change impacts are exacerbating the socio-economic difficulties already being faced by indigenous communities including discrimination, displacement, political and economic marginalization, lack of social services and unemployment.

Particularly for women, drying up of water sources requires that they walk longer distances to reach springs and other sources of water. Some women even face sexual violence while collecting water miles away from their communal villages. Water scarcity increases indigenous women's daily work load, since they are primarily responsible for water and kitchen management. Heavier work loads leave less time for women to care for the children or for other social activities. A common phenomenon is that children cannot attend school or seek medical treatment during and after disasters.



Migration is another consequence of climate change because of displacement and livelihood loss. Land erosion and submersion of some villages along the river banks have forced some villagers to migrate to urban areas. Loss of livelihood has forced indigenous peoples of Vietnam to move to cities to find work, affecting relationships within the family, household and society. In Myanmar, members of communities are migrating into Kachin and Shan states, resulting in economic tensions among existing groups and newcomers.

Other serious social consequences are vanished indigenous religions, cultural practices, knowledge and traditions. In addition, government neglect of basic social services, infrastructure and disaster preparedness and response mechanisms and prevailing poverty and marginalization of indigenous peoples' communities further increase their vulnerability to extreme climate conditions and affect their capacity to adapt to natural calamities.

II. STATE'S ACTION PLANS AND MEASURES RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE

States are obliged to come up with National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) to address the issue of climate change. NAPAs provide a process for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to identify priority activities that respond to their urgent and immediate needs to adapt to climate change – those for which further delay could increase vulnerability or lead to increased costs at a later stage.¹

Meanwhile, countries across the globe have committed to create a new international climate agreement by the conclusion of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris in December 2015. In preparation, countries have agreed to publicly outline what post-2020 climate actions they intend to take under a new international agreement, known as their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). The INDCs are plans of each country towards decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, which will largely determine whether the world achieves an ambitious 2015 agreement and is put on a path toward a low-carbon, climate-resilient future.²

However, from the country reports submitted by indigenous organizations, it appears that not all governments in Asia have developed appropriate plans, policies and measures to prepare their citizenry for the consequences of climate change. Nor have all Asian governments submitted their INDCs in preparation for COP21, as required by the UNFCCC. In addition, there are hardly any programs directed at, or that take into consideration, the particular problems and situations of indigenous peoples. Much less can you find meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in the formulation of government plans and strategies addressing climate change. From the country reports, we cite below a number of Asian States' national action plans and measures in relation to climate change.

In Bangladesh, the government has adopted National Adaptation plan. Yet there are no specific work plans to address the problems that indigenous peoples face due to climate change. Funds have been set up, i.e., the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) with support from the national budget, and the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF) with the assistance of development partners, namely United Kingdom, Denmark, European Union and Sweden. However, indigenous peoples in Bangladesh face limitations in accessing funds for the preservation and

¹ UN Framework Convention on Climate Change website. http://unfccc.int/national_reports/napa/items/2719.php. Accessed on October 16, 2015

² World Resources Institute website. <http://www.wri.org/indc-definition>. Accessed on October 16, 2015



protection of their areas in their own ways. Indigenous peoples believe that their traditional knowledge in restoring forests and nature could be adopted in government policies to mitigate the current climate risks. However, it has been reported that 236 projects of BCCTF directly or indirectly violate the rights of indigenous peoples in Modhupur. Many development projects in Chittagong Hill Tracts are already being implemented, without informing or including any indigenous leaders in the committee or project plan, in violation of their right to Free, Prior and Inform Consent. Indigenous peoples' organizations in Bangladesh conclude that government has no specific work plans to resolve the problems they face in relation to climate change.

In 2011, the Nepal government passed a policy for climate change adaptation and mitigation and established a Climate Change Center as a technical institution to address issues of climate change. Its National Plan of Action (NAPA) deals with: Agriculture and Food security, Climate Change disaster hazards, Urban residence and infrastructure development, People's health, Forest and Biodiversity and infrastructure, Water resource and energy. The government has also been implementing Local Adaptation Plan of Action (LAPA) in 14 different districts. The target of the LAPA is to support disadvantaged groups who are facing negative impacts to adapt climate change. As of September 2015, government representatives have not yet prepared for COP21. They plan to participate in an international workshop for pre-COP21 preparation in the Bangkok, Thailand, after which the government will draft its position paper.

The Philippines passed its Climate Change Act (RA 9729) in 2009 to ensure the mainstreaming of climate change into the national, sectoral and local development plans and programs, in synergy with disaster risk reduction. The Act also mandates the creation of the Climate Change Commission and the National Panel of Technical Experts. The government has established a People's Survival Fund, which is a domestic "rewards fund" aimed at addressing urgent adaptation needs at the local level, and to finance adaptation programs and projects that are directly supportive of the objectives enumerated in the Climate Change Action Plans. There is also the National Climate Change Action Plan (2011) that outlines the specific long-term program and strategies for adaptation and mitigation, and subsequent action plans of local government units and communities. Only very few indigenous groups, particularly Tebtebba Foundation, have participated in the government's planning process in climate change together with civil society organizations.

The Vietnam government has taken concrete steps to respond to climate change. The National Target Programme to Respond to Climate Change was approved by the Prime Minister in 2008. It also has a National Action Plan on Climate Change for the period 2012-2020, a National Target Programme to Respond to Climate Change for the period of 2012-2015, an Action Plan for Green Growth adopted in 2014 and a National target program of all sectors. Although the government has come up with national strategies and plans to cope with climate change at the macro level, the plans are not clear especially at the grassroots level and in mountainous areas where many indigenous peoples live. Policy legislation, the organizational apparatus for state management and mobilization of resources to cope with climate change have yet to be fully worked-out by the government.

In India, the government released India's first National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) on June 30, 2008, outlining existing and future policies and programs on mitigation and adaptation. The plan identifies eight core "national missions" running through 2017, by which the government has set ambitious targets for clean energy. Measures taken include decisions to tax coal, petrol and diesel and a "solar mission" to deliver up to 100GW of solar power by 2019. This is part of the targeted 175GW of clean energy that it aims to install by 2022 through renewable energy projects.



The Indian government is seen to focus on adaptation through sustainable practices in dealing with the climate change as against mitigation through emission cuts. However, indigenous peoples report that the NAPCC formulation lacked meaningful participation of indigenous peoples.

Malaysia is promoting economic development side by side with environmental protection. Malaysia has promised to lower its carbon emissions by implementing policies such as supporting public transport. Malaysia is a member of the Like-Minded Developing Countries and appears to be supporting differentiated targets that could allow for new carbon market mechanisms and more loopholes for corporations rather than advancing deep emission cuts that should be required by all states. In Sabah, the Malaysian government through the Sabah Parks initiated a study on the pattern of forest biodiversity in order to monitor forest changes due to climate change. The government through Sabah Forest further increased protected areas in many parts of Sabah in order to provide a corridor for wildlife to move from one protected area to another. This is an issue as the indigenous peoples were asked to move out of the protected areas.

For Indonesia, the government continues to deny the recognition of Masyarakat Adat as Indigenous Peoples in its climate change documents. The Draft INDC in Bahasa Indonesia includes Masyarakat Adat but the English version uses the term “Adat Communities,” which does not conform with international human rights norms and instruments. In addition, the government fails to recognize the contribution of indigenous peoples in climate change mitigation and adaptation despite statements by Indonesian President Jokowi acknowledging such.

The government of Taiwan/China has a set of policies on “conservation of national lands,” which include water and soil conservation measures and delineation of “geologically sensitive areas.” These areas are those judged to be geohazard prone areas, which are off-limits to residents. However, these policies do not respect nor utilize traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and prevent them from doing agricultural production. As a result, indigenous peoples have lost their livelihoods and were forced to relocate away from their ancestral lands. There are also policies for disaster relief, local township and village construction programs, urban planning programs, laws governing national parks, and regulations for environment impact assessment studies. These government policies and laws have great impact on indigenous peoples because they fail to take into consideration indigenous people’s culture, customary practices, livelihoods and traditional values. Consultations with affected indigenous communities are also rarely done. Government agencies often neglect to ensure indigenous peoples’ participation and consultation when drafting and amending procedures.

III. IMPACTS OF FALSE SOLUTIONS TO CLIMATE CHANGE ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Indigenous peoples in Asia are critical about purported solutions that states or corporations are offering in response to climate change. They are wary of false solutions that could harm the integrity of the environment, violate their rights and undermine the welfare of indigenous peoples. They have put attention into determining which climate change solutions could truly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, are appropriate to their particular situation, are respectful of indigenous peoples’ rights and contribute to their sustainable development.



Among the offered solutions to climate change is the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the UNFCCC, whereby emission-reduction projects in developing countries can earn certified emission reduction credits. These saleable credits can be bought and used by industrialized countries to meet a part of their emission reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol. The mechanism is supposed to stimulate emission reductions, while giving industrialized countries flexibility in meeting their emission reduction limitation targets.³

Essentially, CDM is an emissions trading mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol, whereby industrialized countries (Annex 1 countries) with greenhouse gas reduction commitments can invest in emissions reduction ventures in developing countries as a cheaper alternative and to avoid reducing their emissions in their own countries. Among the methodologies included under the CDM are projects such as afforestation and reforestation, carbon capture and storage, renewable energy projects such as dams, biomass, biofuels, natural gas, recovery and utilization of waste gas, geothermal energy, shift in transportation means such as high speed railway systems, among many others.⁴

However, negative stories abound about the impacts of CDM projects implemented in indigenous peoples' territories. Accounts on the impacts of CDM projects range from land grabbing to indigenous peoples' displacement and food insecurity. The latter is often a result of conversion of agricultural lands from food crops into bio-fuel production.

Bio-fuels

The large scale conversion of forestland into mono-crop plantations in Malaysia has a great impact on indigenous peoples. The logging in forests and expansion of mono-crop oil palm, rubber and biofuel plantations have destroyed the watershed and caused serious river pollution and frequent floods. The volume of water reaching downstream has also decreased and some fishes from the sea, which used to reach upstream for breeding could not be found. There are also cases of worsening floods throughout the country particular in the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia and East Malaysia.

The Green India Mission under the country's National Action Plan on Climate Change promotes the production of biofuels as an alternative energy source. The promotion of mono-crop plantations by private corporations has already begun in the Northeast region of India as part of the state's mitigation measures, even without the conduct of impact assessments. Indigenous peoples' lands are thus being converted into production areas for bio-fuels such as oil palm, corn, soya, jatropha, etc. This has led to appropriation of communal lands, land confiscation and forced eviction of indigenous people from their customary land and water sources to make way for large-scale biofuel plantations. The influx of large-scale biofuel operations have turned indigenous peoples from independent small producers into low-paid plantation workers. Other concerns are habitat destruction pushing species towards extinction, social conflicts over jobs, land and livelihoods, water pollution from chemical inputs and mill effluent, health concerns, food insecurity issues, human rights violations and lack of accountability of biofuel companies.

³ UNFCCC website. <https://cdm.unfccc.int>. Accessed on October 16, 2015

⁴ UNFCCC website. <https://cdm.unfccc.int/methodologies/PAMethodologies/approved>. Accessed on October 16, 2015



Hydropower Dams

The building of mega-dams is also now seeing resurgence in many indigenous peoples areas around Asia. Private companies see large dams as good projects because they are guaranteed with the return of investment and mega-profits, and at the same time they could also be used to earn emission reduction credits under the Clean Development Mechanism. As such there are more than 100 large dams being planned across Asia

For indigenous peoples, large dams have caused widespread destruction and displacement. Damming of rivers, changing their use or diverting their flow also means loss of their lands, indigenous knowledge and culture. Construction of mega-dams for water supply and energy destroys rainforests and the livelihood of the indigenous communities. Diversion of rivers poses risks to the biodiversity in these freshwater ecosystems, endangering indigenous fish species and causing serious problems in the food and livelihood sources of the people. Further, large dams have submerged and destroyed indigenous territories to make way for support structures. Indigenous people affected by large dams decry the lack of respect for their rights over their lands and resources and to genuine FPIC processes in the planning and construction of these dam projects.

Environmental risks due to dams include massive soil movement and vulnerability to earthquakes and strong typhoons. Breaking or erosion of the dam structures could result in severe flooding and massive displacement of communities and farms downstream. Aside from flooding, erosion and siltation of rivers are feared, especially without proper maintenance of the structure, watershed or the surrounding environment

Dams in North East India

India's National Action Plan on Climate Change includes the construction of dams as so-called clean energy, especially in North East India. Already several dams in North East India have been cleared to receive carbon credits by various companies as CDM of UNFCCC. There are twenty large dams in the states of Arunachal, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Sikkim and Tripura in North east India as per NLRD 2009. Construction of dams, rather than mitigating climate change, will contribute enormously to climate change. International financial institutions, like the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are also taking a proactive role in promoting market based solutions to climate change, in clear exclusion of the local indigenous peoples of India's North East.

Afforestation and reforestation

Conserving and sustainably managing existing natural forests and forest soils, which have large stores of carbon, can significantly reduce GHG emissions. Afforestation and reforestation are regarded as efficient means of sequestering atmospheric carbon. However, such projects also have adverse impacts on indigenous peoples living in and dependent on forests.

Governments meeting in Bali, Indonesia for the 13th Conference of the Parties (COP-13) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change decided to focus on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forests Degradation (REDD) in developing countries in order to mitigate climate change. The basic idea of REDD is that "Developing countries willing and able to reduce their deforestation rate keyed to a reference time period will receive financial compensation. Transfers will be based either on foregone opportunity costs or on the value of carbon market prices."



REDD Plus, or the extension of REDD to avoided deforestation, has the potential to provide new revenue streams to local economies for forest protection and forest management services through conservation, management and enhancement of carbon stocks. REDD Plus activities came into greater prominence since Bonn 2009 as a call for funding or investment in protecting tropical forests, which store carbon, increase sequestration, create rain, moderate weather conditions and protect biodiversity.

However, people living in forested areas expressed concerns on whether the REDD Plus initiative of the World Bank would benefit them in the long term and recognize their rights over their traditional forest lands or resources.

In Thailand, the following case illustrates how the government has taken steps to include indigenous peoples in its REDD+ project.

Full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in REDD+

Thailand is one of the countries selected by the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) as a REDD country participant after its Readiness Project Idea Note (R-PIN) was accepted in March 2009. The R-PP prepared by the Department of National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP), Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MONRE) has been approved by the Participant Committee of the FCPF in March 2013 with a condition to take additional consultations with the concerned stakeholders in particular indigenous peoples and local communities. The revised version was submitted to and accepted on 27 December 2013. The signing of the contract, however, has been considerably delayed because of the reform process and it is uncertain if it will be signed before the adoption of the new Constitution and formation of the new Parliament.

The most recent development is the project launched by DNP under the national green growth strategy entitled "Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emission from Forestry Sector Using incentives and Participatory Process" (2014-2018). This project has a total budget of 258 Million Baht (approx. USD 8 million). Key activities include: a) Development of model communities in protected areas on sustainable forest management and enhancement of forest carbon stock by using REDD+ mechanism, b) Development of tools and knowledge required by REDD+ readiness, and c) Forest monitoring (conduct survey, study and assess changes of ecosystem and carbon sequestration in forest areas). These will be implemented among 20 communities in different parts of Thailand. Concerns have been raised that there has been no full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the project and that safeguards have not been taken into account. Indigenous peoples in Thailand are therefore closely monitoring the implementation of this project to ensure that this has caused no harm to indigenous communities and that indigenous peoples have equal benefit sharing from engaging in this process.

Violation of Human Rights and Indigenous Peoples Rights

Increasing cases of human rights violations, displacement and conflicts result from the implementation of so-called climate change solutions being imposed on indigenous peoples without their participation and consent. The expropriation of ancestral lands and forests for biofuel plantations (palm oil, corn etc), reforestation, as well as for carbon sink and renewable energy projects has resulted in criminalization, arrest, detention, displacement, abduction, killings and other human rights violations of indigenous peoples' collective and individual rights. Proposed solutions to climate change such as biofuels and CDM projects reaffirm and legitimize the continued onslaught on indigenous peoples rights to land, territories and resources.



Criminalizing Indigenous Peoples' Forest Use in Thailand

Land tenure rights is of great importance for indigenous peoples. This issue, however, was not taken into consideration when the Thai government passed in 2014 a master plan to resolve problems of deforestation, state land encroachment and sustainable natural resource management. Its main goal is to increase forest cover from the current level (33.3%) to 40% within a 10-year timeframe. The master plan is divided into 3 phases: 1st phase (2018) is to stop deforestation and reclaim the state lands from illegal encroachment; 2nd phase is to set up an effective and sustainable forest management system within 2 years; and 3rd phase is to revive forest health conditions all nationwide. The implementation of this master plan has caused grave concerns for indigenous peoples in Thailand as the government could use this as a pretext to take back the lands traditionally owned by indigenous peoples and evict the people out of the forest. An example is the case of Thung Pha kha village in Mae Hong Son province. The implementation of the New Forestry Master Plan led to the arrest of 39 Karen villagers in that village on 4 May 2014. They were charged with illegal possession of timber, clearing of forestland, causing disturbance to wildlife habitat and "obstructing official business". In reality, the arrested Karens were only cutting wood for building and maintaining their houses. On 19 October, the Court sentenced 24 of them to imprisonment and the other 15 were fined between 330 to 660 USD. The government should urgently address this issue.

IV. INITIATIVES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ON CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

Indigenous peoples in Asia have been able to sustainably manage and protect their land, environment and resources throughout the generations. There is no denying the close connection of indigenous peoples with land and nature as the source of their life, culture and livelihoods, which they continue to safeguard for the future. Thus indigenous peoples are not merely vulnerable peoples; they possess invaluable knowledge, values, systems and practices that can provide solutions to climate change.

Aside from sustaining their collective principles, values and worldviews on the conservation of the environment, indigenous peoples have developed coping and adaptation strategies to deal with the impacts of climate change. Among the strategies and initiatives that have helped them survive in the face of severe impacts of climate change are the following:

1. Using indigenous crop varieties, adjusting agricultural practices, diversifying livelihood activities and adopting climate-resilient native species and seeds

Indigenous crop varieties have advantages in terms of drought, pest and flood tolerance. For instance, the people in the provinces of the Mekong Delta typically use sun rice (a wild rice) for sowing on land that is frequently flooded. Likewise, the Hmong in Van Chan District, Yen Bai use drought-resistant rice for transplanting in the fields. Native species and crop varieties that are adapted to growing in different locations such as river banks, high mountains and forests are also used. Not only indigenous varieties but other climate-resilient crops with different susceptibilities to drought, flood and pests are also adopted.



In response to changing weather patterns, indigenous peoples are adjusting their agricultural calendar, for example, delaying farming activity and opting to plant alternative crops. Because the rain floods come earlier, Tay people in Lang Son are known to plant with earlier seasons using short-day varieties for cultivation.

Diversification of livelihood activities and crops is also done to minimize climate change risks. For instance, people previously used to grow only one major crop per season. Now people grow many different kinds of crops to minimize the risk of harvest failures. Intercropping is also practiced to increase incomes and improve land. For example, the Tay and Nung people in Lang Son, Hoa Binh intercrop maize and soya to combat erosion and improve the soil.

In breeding of livestock, the people have observed that the use of hybrids in livestock and poultry has raised potential risks because the resistance of hybrids to disease and climate change is weaker than indigenous varieties. The use of native varieties of animals is also observed to bring higher income for farmers. Thus indigenous peoples in some areas have turned to indigenous landraces in livestock such as black pigs, black chickens and ducks, which can withstand harsh weather, are easier to care for and are less prone disease.

2. Use of traditional science-based knowledge

Another important strategy is enhancing and reviving traditional sustainable knowledge and practices in agriculture and forest conservation, which are also science-based and could be combined with innovations and modern technology. These include such practices as inter-cropping and multi-cropping, small scale upland organic farming and indigenous systems of water and forest management. An example of this is the setting-up of community nursery and seed bank of indigenous plant and tree varieties and community-managed reforestation programs.

Implementation of customary laws on land use and forest conservation is another adaptation measure. Most indigenous peoples have laws prohibiting the felling of trees in the watershed, in sacred forests and other critical areas. Traditional knowledge is also used to cope with water shortage and to help people find alternative sources of water during periods of drought.

Another strategy is the use of traditional self-help methods during disasters to cope with emergency conditions. Enhancing the practice of indigenous traditional systems of cooperation and collective action in times of disaster or emergencies is often practiced in the Cordillera region, Philippines. For instance, cooperative efforts are done during rescue and retrieval operations for landslide victims during typhoons, through an organized system led by community elders and participated in by all village members. Resources and services for disaster relief and rehabilitation were also solicited and contributed locally, nationally and abroad by indigenous peoples and charitable organizations. Traditional self-help practices and community values of mutual support, volunteerism and solidarity among indigenous peoples are essential in overcoming hardships in times of calamities and disasters in the face of minimal and ineffective response from the government.



A number of indigenous peoples organizations in the Philippines have maximized traditional values of mutual assistance in times of disasters resulting from climate change. The Serve the People Brigade, a disaster response network of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance and the Cordillera Disaster Response and Development Services, Lingkod Katribu, Barug Katungod are just a few of the organizations doing such work in order to provide services to victims of disasters. Their services include:

- a. Emergency assistance in the form of food and non-food items
- b. Extending livelihood assistance in the form of seeds, farm tools, farm inputs, hose for irrigation and others.
- c. Strengthening and protecting community livelihoods through the implementation of small-scale projects such as community nurseries, water systems and others
- d. Shelter assistance for communities affected by typhoons utilizing indigenous knowledge in the design and construction
- e. Developing partners for resilience where disaster response can serve as a bridge to strengthen partnerships with less vulnerable sectors. This partnership can then serve as an initial step to increase community empowerment.
- f. Disaster response and climate change adaptation based on rights-based approaches and respect;
- g. Community Risk Assessment, a participatory process to gain a clear understanding of the impacts of climate change and disasters at the community-level.

Traditional cooperation among indigenous peoples in Taiwan

In most of Taiwan's indigenous cultures, there is a tradition of "sharing of resources", "sharing of food" and "sharing of burden" in times of crisis and in facing natural disasters. In the aftermath of Typhoon Soudelor, the Fukuyama Tribe in northern Taiwan had no water, no electricity, and were cut off by road from outside for over one week, with 400 residents being isolated in the village. Government rescue units could not reach them, so every household brought out their food to a common pool for everyone to share. With this community effort, working together to share the work burdens, they were able to reduce the typhoon's impact.

Other self-adaptation techniques include the used of plantations for landslide and erosion control. For instance, bamboo, coffee and other trees are often planted in places with high risk of erosion such as by rivers and streams and high-elevation areas in order to prevent soil erosion. Other examples of adaptation using traditional knowledge are planting medicinal plants in farms and gardens and creating shellfish ponds near the house. Integrating scientific climate information and indigenous knowledge is useful in facilitating informed decision-making among indigenous peoples.

3. Forest protection and conservation activities

Watershed protection, restoration of degraded ecosystems and intensifying activities to conserve forest and protect water resources are also done as a strategy in climate change adaptation and mitigation by indigenous communities. This is conducted through the implementation and management of eco-tourism activities, community-based projects on agro-forestry, micro-hydro and non-timber forest products in order to conserve the forests and natural resources and protect



indigenous territories. For instance, Indigenous peoples living in mountainous provinces do not cut trees at the mountain top area when practicing shifting cultivation in order to combat erosion during cultivation and to maintain soil moisture even during prolonged drought.



Indigenous villagers in Kampung Buayan, located deep in the Crocker Range in Sabah, working together to build a micro-hydro. Indigenous Peoples in Malaysia have been advancing local climate resilience, piloting pico and micro-hydro projects across the country to bring electricity to remote areas while successfully protecting watershed areas

Many indigenous peoples in Thailand are still practicing rotational farming or shifting cultivation. Many people including some government agencies have misunderstood this form of agriculture. Such practice is often seen as the main cause of deforestation and haze problem. However, this kind of agriculture is sustainable and appropriate for highland areas as shown by studies conducted. It was found that villagers traditionally have knowledge in managing fire especially in rotational farming areas. Such knowledge has been developed and applied in constructing community firebreak lines at both community and watershed levels. Thus, rotational farming system is not a main cause of global warming or smog crisis as it is wrongly understood by many. On the contrary, this system has helped mitigate the impact of global warming because the land that is left to fallow allows trees to regenerate naturally. This system should be recognized and promoted by government agencies rather than seen as a problem.

4. Mapping and community-based monitoring and information systems

Community mapping has been as a strategy whereby indigenous peoples protect their territories through managing their own forests and natural resources. This is done through the declaration and demarcation of ancestral lands/ communal land or portions thereof as conservation areas. A resource inventory and determination of carbon content is done to determine the health of the forest within their collective land, territories and resources. Other activities include community mapping, delineation of customary land boundaries, documentation of customary land use, and identification of hazard areas and vulnerable spots as disaster risk areas. Community meetings, planning and training on resource inventory are also conducted as part of the process. AIPP has been supporting community mapping, monitoring, resources inventory and community mobilizations for land rights recognition in several countries in Asia such as in India, Cambodia, Nepal, Vietnam.



Community-based monitoring and information systems are also implemented for information-sharing, comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of development projects.

5. Organizing, awareness-raising, training and solidarity actions of indigenous peoples' organizations

Building and strengthening people's organizations and undertaking collective actions are important in protecting and defending the indigenous peoples' lands, territories and resources.. These are necessary in addressing the impacts of climate change and defining appropriate adaptation strategies and disaster preparedness actions. Organizing the younger generation is also being done as they need to be aware and trained to protect their land as the future leaders of indigenous peoples. Collective actions by the community to protect their lands and resources from plunder by extractive and destructive projects such as large-scale mining, corporate energy projects, and expansion of plantations are also ways of addressing the climate crisis.

The conduct of community awareness and trainings on climate change, disaster preparedness, ecosystem management and on specific adaptation and actions is part of the process of empowering indigenous peoples organizations. Other initiatives include conducting activities to increase awareness on indigenous knowledge and practices among the youth, holding community planning on climate change and on specific approaches such as community mapping, disaster preparedness and disaster risk assessment and management, nursery and livelihood projects.

6. Collaboration with government

In Sabah, indigenous peoples have started engaging with government to promote the indigenous tagal system in caring for the forest. Tagal is a community based forestry system whereby indigenous peoples have the responsibility of looking after their forest. Engaging with relevant people in government is necessary in reclaiming back their land.

Community cooperation and engaging with government in Taiwan

In 2014, an Atayal mountain village with 76 residences was cut off for about a week due to Typhoon Fong Wang. The youth in the village put up the labor to clear the access road and fixed up the broken water pipes. Village women working together prepared the meals.

In these and other mountain communities, the indigenous elders used their traditional knowledge and understanding of the forest and surrounding environment to enable them to find water sources and natural springs after typhoon devastations. They utilized all-natural ways of water delivery to the community using hollowed bamboo sections joined together.

The elders also used their traditional knowledge of plants and wild fruits to pick vegetation and produce herbal medicine for villages. These helped to cleanse the water and reduce infection after typhoon devastation. Some herbal medicine can help prevent dengue fever and other tropical diseases.

Community leaders held meetings to dialogue with government's public sector agencies. They gradually reduced the coastal concrete barriers, replacing them to provide natural habitats for the ecosystem. They used natural farming and traditional agricultural techniques to reduce soil salinization and gradually improve the agricultural land.



V. RECOMMENDATIONS: COP 21 AND BEYOND

Indigenous peoples have expressed concerns that the global climate crisis is the result of the failure of a development model, which is contingent on using natural resources without consideration for sustainability and social equity. Corporate greed and control over resources have rendered national decision-makers powerless in the face of pressure from industrialised nations. Likewise, local elites continue to plunder natural resources for their own benefit. It is time to reverse the course of development and to adhere to values of mutual support, collectivism, spirituality, subsistence and sustainability, which indigenous peoples have always subscribed to.

Global economic expansion and carbon dioxide (CO₂) per capita emission per country over time are intimately related. Looking at the commitments being made by countries to reducing their GHG emissions, the reality is that these commitments are way too low compared to what is needed to reverse the trend of climate change. Hence, a huge amount of work is required in order to influence States and policy makers to agree on ambitious targets for the reduction of GHG emissions. Decisive actions to address climate change must come from those who have the greatest responsibility in the climate crisis. In the upcoming COP21, any agreement shall ensure full accountability of developed countries through actions to prevent 1.5 degree increase in global temperature, and provide the needed financial and technological support to developing countries. Further, all states shall commit to sustainable and equitable use of resources and respect for human rights in climate change actions and measures.

Indigenous peoples of Asia are thereby highlighting the following key messages for COP21 and beyond:

- 1) Indigenous peoples are not the problem but are part of the solution to climate change.
- 2) Security of land, territories and resources of indigenous peoples is critical for effective climate change solutions.
- 3) Traditional knowledge systems of indigenous peoples are crucial in combatting climate change.
- 4) Indigenous peoples are not just vulnerable groups; we are self-governing peoples with collective rights and are vital actors to climate change.
- 5) It is essential to develop partnership with rights holders indigenous peoples to combat climate change. Partnership with indigenous peoples shall be based on the respect, recognition, protection and promotion of their collective rights and enhancing their contributions in sustaining mother-earth.

General Calls for action by States:

1. Commit to make targets that will keep the temperature increase below 1.5 C degrees.
2. All Parties shall put into motion the common but differentiated responsibilities by clear actions to address the root causes and factors for climate change and ensure equity, justice and sustainability of mother earth
3. Ensure the respect and recognition of indigenous peoples rights to their lands, territories and resources including their sustainable livelihoods, resource management systems, traditional knowledge and indigenous institutions.



4. Ensure full and effective implementation of the right to consultation, participation and free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples in all processes, and in the design and implementation of measures related to climate change at all levels—local, national, regional and global.
5. Solutions to address the effects of climate change must be holistic, coherent, equitable and respectful of the rights of indigenous peoples and the protection of mother earth. It should include indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge, innovations and sustainable resource management and conservation practices, which are vital in sustaining mother earth. This is clearly demonstrated in the remaining rich biodiversity in indigenous territories across the globe.
6. Abandon false solutions to climate change that negatively impact on indigenous peoples' rights to their lands, air, oceans, forests and territories. These include nuclear energy, large-scale dams, geo-engineering techniques, "clean coal," agro-fuels, and market-based mechanisms such as carbon trading, the Clean Development Mechanism, and forest offsets.
7. Any outcome agreement on the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) shall include indicators on the extent to which indigenous peoples' rights and safeguards are respected, and equitable benefit sharing including non-carbon benefits are included..
8. In order to support the initiatives and efforts to address climate change effectively at the community level, Parties shall ensure direct access to funds for climate change mitigation and adaptation by indigenous peoples, including in the Green Climate Fund. Such a fund shall raise the capacities of indigenous peoples to address the impacts of climate change and strengthen their resilience; and to enhance their traditional knowledge and sustainable livelihoods, which indigenous peoples have sustained for generations but are now threatened by climate change.

Particular Recommendations:

1. Land, Territories and Resources

- Respect and protect indigenous peoples livelihoods, resource management systems in relation to securing their rights to their lands territories
- Stop all forms of land grabbing and establish effective and accessible grievance mechanism for indigenous peoples
- Recognize and integrate the positive values of indigenous peoples in addressing climate change: (1) Sustainability vs. Productivity; (2) Collectivity vs. Individuality; (3) Naturality vs. Engineered; (4) Spirituality vs. Rationality; (5) Process vs. Result; (6) Subsistence vs. Commerciality; and (7) Customary Law vs. State Law; (8) Harmony with nature versus Domination; and (9) Mutual Support versus Competition.

2. Climate Change solutions at the local and national level

- Ensure the rights-based and sustainable eco-system approach in developing national and local mitigation and adaptation plans with the effective participation of stakeholders including indigenous peoples.
- Recognize and protect the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples on natural resource management and biodiversity conservation



- Implement low carbon projects like the use of renewable energy and solar energy in partnership with indigenous peoples.
- Establish a transparent and accessible climate fund for vulnerable groups and indigenous peoples at the country level

3. Indigenous Peoples' Participation and Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)

- Establish mechanisms for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples at various levels of decision-making and ensure genuine indigenous peoples' representation.
- Recognize and respect community processes and protocols defined by indigenous communities in relation to consultations, representation and collective decision-making.
- Ensure the proper implementation of the process of obtaining the free prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples on projects and programmes on climate change to be implemented in their territories or may have adverse impacts to them

4. Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

- Develop targeted programs in partnership with indigenous organisations and communities to better monitor and manage geo-hazard prone areas in indigenous territories.
- Ensure appropriate measures, mechanisms and resources to address the problem of forced relocation of indigenous peoples due to disasters.
- Design and implement appropriate disaster management plans in partnership with indigenous institutions and communities
- Implement concrete measures to address root causes or aggravating factors to disasters such as deforestation among others
- Establish loss and damage fund at community level.

5. Traditional Knowledge, Livelihood, Local Economies and Food Security

- Recognize traditional occupations/livelihood of indigenous peoples and support appropriate programmes to enhance their capacities and sustainable livelihoods
- Support the initiatives of indigenous peoples to monitor and document their traditional knowledge, biodiversity and resource management systems
- Ensure the protection of traditional knowledge from individual/private patenting
- Support subsistence economies of indigenous peoples for food security and enhancement of traditional knowledge
- Stop the criminalization of indigenous peoples in the practice of their traditional occupations such as gathering of non-timber forest products, hunting, fishing among others with due recognition of their sustainable resource management and conservation.

6. Forest, Biodiversity, Drivers of Deforestation and REDD+

- Implement appropriate policies and effective interventions to address forest fires, and drivers of deforestation and forest degradation
- Design and implement appropriate programmes in partnership with indigenous communities to enhance water, soil and biodiversity conservation
- Implement fully the safeguards in REDD+ including the full recognition and the forest tenure, sustainable livelihoods of forest-dependent indigenous peoples and their entitlement to equitable benefits in sustainable forest protection and management
- Fully recognize and protect sustainable rotational agriculture/shifting cultivation as sustainable land use and management system;
- Repeal policies prohibiting the practice of sustainable rotational agriculture/ shifting cultivation.

AIPP at a glance

The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) is a regional organization founded in 1988 by indigenous peoples' movements as a platform for solidarity and cooperation. AIPP is actively promoting and defending indigenous peoples' rights and human rights; sustainable development and management of resources and environment protection. Through the years, AIPP has developed its expertise on grassroots capacity building, advocacy and networking from local to global levels and strengthening partnerships with indigenous organizations, support NGOs, UN agencies and other institutions. At present, AIPP has 47 members from 14 countries in Asia with 7 indigenous peoples' national alliances/networks and 35 local and sub-national organizations including 16 are ethnic-based organizations, five (5) indigenous women and four (4) are indigenous youth organizations.

Our Vision

Indigenous peoples in Asia are living with dignity and fully exercising their rights, distinct cultures and identity, and enhancing their sustainable management systems on lands, territories and resources for their own future and development in an environment of peace, justice and equality.

Our Mission

AIPP strengthen the solidarity, cooperation and capacities of indigenous peoples in Asia to promote and protect their rights, cultures and identities, and their sustainable resource management system for their development and self-determination.

Our Programmes

Our main areas of work among the different programmes are information dissemination, awareness raising, capacity building, advocacy and networking from local to global. Our programmes are:

- Human Rights Campaign and Policy Advocacy
- Regional Capacity Building
- Environment
- Indigenous Women
- Communications Development
- Organizational Strengthening

Through our Indigenous Women (IW) programme, AIPP aims to empower indigenous women through networking, education and capacity building activities with the overall goal for indigenous women to assert, promote and protect their rights as women and as indigenous peoples.

AIPP is accredited as an NGO in special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and as observer organization with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). AIPP is a member of the International Land Coalition (ILC).

Email: aippmail@aippnet.org

Twitter: [@aippccmin](https://twitter.com/aippccmin), [@aippnet](https://twitter.com/aippnet)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AIPPClimate

Websites: www.aippnet.org, www.cmin.aippnet.org