



From Territorial Peoples toward a Global Agreement

Global proposal for the 2014 UN Climate Summit by indigenous peoples that hold
influence over 85% of the World's Tropical Forests

AMAZON BASIN / MESOAMERICA / CONGO BASIN / PACIFIC AND SOUTHEAST ASIA





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EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL PEOPLES AND COMMUNITIES: A CHALLENGE IN GLOBAL CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS

The presence and full participation of indigenous peoples is vitally important in all negotiation processes related to rain forests and climate issues at national, regional and international levels. Innumerable scientific research efforts, forest coverage maps and in situ evidence demonstrate that indigenous peoples' experience and knowledge of maintaining and protecting the forest and its biodiversity for thousands of years is an essential element in global efforts to adapt to and mitigate climate change. According to the World Bank, indigenous populations protect nearly 80% of the world's biodiversity¹.

Despite international achievements in indigenous rights, like the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Convention 169, in the context of climate change discussions and other related issues, the participation of indigenous peoples in discussions, the development of proposals and self defence against certain agreements is limited, even when those negotiations will affect or disrupt their livelihoods.

Over the past two decades, indigenous populations have gained observer status in initiatives such as the World Bank's FCPF, the UN REDD Policy Board, The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and others. Their participation has followed an advocacy-based model founded principally on indigenous individuals, which have been able to advance key issues relevant to indigenous populations onto the international agenda, but have not made progress related to integral territorial agendas.

In this context, ensuring the effective participation of indigenous peoples and communities becomes a central challenge; specifically, linking territorial agendas with international spaces for debate and negotiation on the restitution and consolidation of ancestral territories, legally binding Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), integral territorial rights (soil, sub-soil, forest cover, carbon, and ecosystem functions), as concrete and effective early Social and Environmental Safeguards.

1 <http://www.bancomundial.org/es/topic/indigenouspeoples/overview>



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2014 CLIMATE SUMMIT, STARTING POINT FOR A GLOBAL AGREEMENT FROM THE TERRITORIAL AGENDA

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP 20 which will take place in Lima, Peru, must produce a “solid draft” that will allow a global agreement to be reached in 2015 regarding the reduction of polluting emissions post 2020.

This scenario has mobilized a series of global programs and donor countries connected to the Global Climate and Forest agenda to forge early agreements and commitments building towards the upcoming COP 20, and to contribute proposals to implement urgent measures to stop global warming.

This mobilization of the global agenda is proof of the importance and necessity to urgently develop a foundation of climate agreements before the COP takes place. Even though there are high expectations for the process leading up to Lima, the pressure over the COP is high; for this reason, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in an effort to ensure an ambitious legal agreement on global climate change in 2015 in Paris, has summoned Heads of State and Government, representatives from corporations, financial institutions, civil society and local leaders to a climate summit that will take place in New York in September

of 2014. With this effort, the United Nations is attempting to construct a solid foundation for negotiations and progress towards emissions reductions and the strengthening of adaptation strategies.

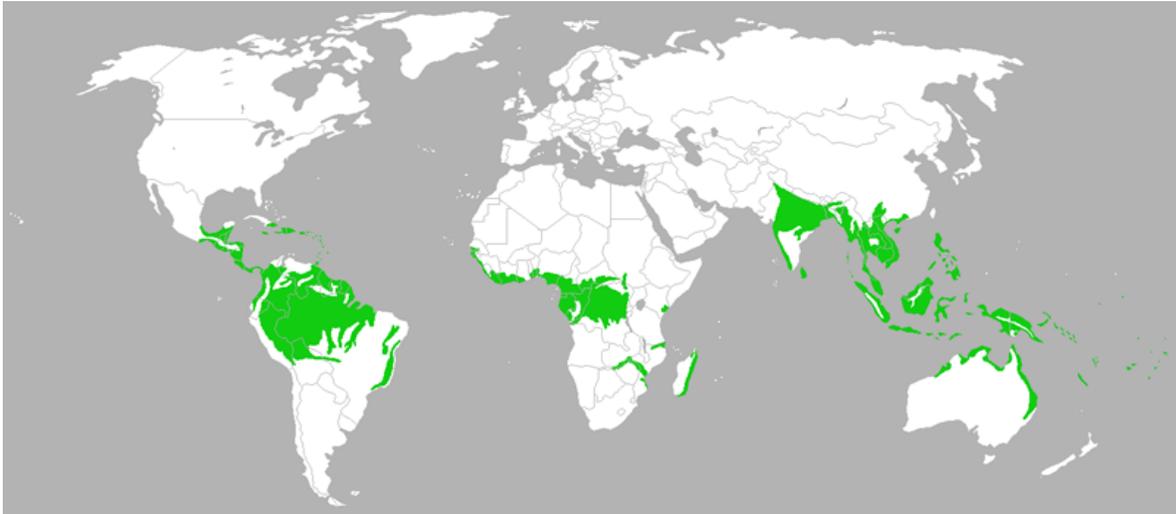
In this international framework, where the forests, and the peoples and communities that inhabit them play a fundamental role in the politics of climate, sustainable development and community rights, a group of indigenous organizations has emerged which represents 85% of the tropical forests in the world that are in community hands (Amazon Basin, Mesoamerica, Congo Basin, South-eastern Asia), and who support the historic demand for territorial recognition, advocacy in climate negotiations process and for the right of self-determination of its peoples.



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THE CONTRIBUTION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND TERRITORIES, A FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE IN THE CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS

In the global context, tropical rain forests are distributed in three main regions: the Amazon which represents approximately 45%; the Congo Basin in central western Africa which constitutes 15%; and the indo malaysian region consisting of 20%. Speaking in qualitative terms, the tropical rain forest is the most complex major biome on the planet and is home to more than half of all existing flora and fauna. The rainforest in the New World, called the Neotropic, possess a rich and enormous diversity of vegetative species.



Fuente: Reelaboración a partir de Porse (2008). The main biomes of the world, en <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7b/Vegetation-no-legend.PNG>.

There is a clear correlation between remaining tropical forests and the presence of indigenous peoples in Latin America, the Congo Basin in Africa and various tropical Asian countries. Indigenous organizations are the common denominator in these important areas which over generations have cared for, protected, and lived in these forests as part of their worldview.

An important and representative set of organizations in this context are the local communities and indigenous peoples of the Global Equatorial Region: the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest (Spanish: La Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana (AIDESEP)) organized in the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin (Spanish: Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígena de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA)); the Network of Indigenous and Local Peoples for Forest Ecosystem Management (French: Réseau des Peuples Autochtones et Locales Pour la Gestion des Écosystèmes Forestiers (REPALEF)) of the Congo Basin; the Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago (Indonesian: Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (AMAN)) of Indonesia and the Mesoamerican Alliance of People and Forests (Spanish: Alianza Mesoamericana de Pueblos y Bosques (AMPB)); whose indigenous managed forests have the highest levels of absorption, balance and storage of carbon (more than 85 giga tonnes of CO₂), and more than 24 functional ecosystems (water, biodiversity, evaporation, pollination, among others) supporting mitigation, adaptation and social-environmental resilience vis-a-vis the global climate crisis to the benefit of all humanity.

At the recent Policy Board meeting of the UN-REDD Programme and the Participants Committee 17th meeting (PC17) of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) (July 2014 in Lima, Peru), representatives of the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest-AIDESEP (Amazonia) and the Mesoamerican Alliance of People and Forests-AMPB (Mesoamerica) presented three fundamental issues from the territorial indigenous organizations of the world's forests:

1. Respect and restitution of ancestral territory: Through the titling of territories occupied, possessed or used ancestrally, recover and devolve comprehensive rights over territories and natural resources.

2. Territorial Climate Finance: national and international agreements to support holistic millennial management by focusing on concrete, accessible and relevant financing in support of the objectives and efforts of Indigenous Peoples and communities through their own methods of organizing in their territory and for the protection and restoration of forest ecosystems and agroforestry land.

3. Self-determination and binding Free, Prior and Informed Consent: conditions for the full, effective and direct participation in national and international decisions on climate change, environment, natural resources, forest and rural development.

The second half of 2014 is a crucial scenario both for the agreements on the climate agenda and for the indigenous peoples of the world. It is an even greater challenge to be able to incorporate the proposals and approaches of the indigenous peoples into those agreements. It is therefore critical to positively influence the 2014 Climate Summit, an event convened by Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon. In his most recent message on August 9th, Ban Ki-moon insisted that all the member states of the United Nations “work in full cooperation with indigenous peoples to better their lives and opportunities, as well as promote and protect their rights, essential for our common future”.

At this Summit, this indigenous territorial group will announce its contribution to protect and sustainably manage 400 million hectares of tropical rainforest. This is a commitment we have made as land owners and as indigenous peoples from these ancestral territories.

It is particularly important to protect the 400 million hectares of forests in the Global Equatorial Region, considering that rainforests contain 59% of the total carbon stored by all forest formations in the world (Phillips and Gentry 1994, Phillips et al., 1998, Clark et al., 2001, Clark 2002, Clark et al., 2003, Vieira et al., 2005, Clark 2007, UNFCCC 2008), and the holistic management of these ecosystems is now viewed as another feasible option for mitigating Global Climate Change. Developmentalism (desarrollismo) and mega-projects are responsible for the loss of 15.4 million hectares of forest per year that result in 13% of the annual emissions of greenhouse gases in the world. Deforestation and degradation has a devastating impact and are responsible for climate variability of the two tropics that form a strip of 5,212 km wide (including 140 countries: 114 in their entirety and 26 partially).

OBJECTIVES

- a) Present a set of proposals for territorial management that contribute to the goals of climate agreements in favour of humanity starting with the recognition of the territorial rights of indigenous peoples.
- b) Disseminate lessons learned from the Amazon Basin, Mesoamerica, the Congo Basin, and the Pacific and Southeast Asia regarding different systems of land governance.
- c) Strengthen the articulation of the territorial organizations of the indigenous peoples of the world, promoting joint advocacy towards the final phases of the global climate agreement in 2015.



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■ EXPECTED RESULTS

- Achieve recognition of the strategic importance of promoting a global agreement focused on consolidating and expanding the territorial rights of indigenous peoples and communities who have been stewards of the world's tropical forests, through the recognition of their territorial rights, direct financing for traditional organizations and respect for self-determination.
- Ensure that the actions taken by indigenous peoples and communities for the millennial mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change are recognized and valued in the 2015 Global Climate Summit commitments.
- Strengthen direct dialogue between governments and the representative authorities of territorial rights holders for the promotion of agreements that strengthen the governance of these territories.
- Promote the articulation of indigenous territorial organizations of the forests for policy advocacy in climate processes.



PARTICIPANTS IN THE INDIGENOUS TERRITORIAL PROPOSAL FOR THE SEPTEMBER 2014 UN CLIMATE SUMMIT

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■ ACTIVITIES IN NEW YORK:

ACTIVITY	DATES	CONTENT
Workshop: Global Status of Territorial Rights and Forests	September 20th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of global context (state of the rights and claimants of the regions and the world). - Report from the regions on the state of the art of rights. . Amazon . Indonesia . DRC . Mesoamerica - Main concerns and proposals for the promotion of rights at the global level.
World Conference of the Indigenous Peoples	September 22nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Titling of territories - Climate Territorial Finance - Self-determination and Free, Prior and Informed Consent: conditions
2014 Climate Summit	September 23rd	<p>Launch: Statement to the world about the contribution for the protection and management of 400 million sustainable hectares of tropical forest.</p> <p>Political Agenda:</p>
Press Conference: The Contribution of Territorial Indigenous Peoples to the Global Climate Agenda	September 23rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Titling of territories - Financing of climate territories - Free, Prior and Informed Consent: conditions

<p>Community Corner, Esquina Comunitaria www.ifnotusthenwho.me/welcome/ Twitter: @IfNotUs_ThenWho Dirección: The Corner, 501 Lexington Ave New York.</p>	<p>19 al 25 de septiembre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Muestra de videos y fotografías- Conferencias- Reuniones- Café
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