



DECLARATION OF THE INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S NETWORK ON BIODIVERSITY OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (RMIB-LAC)

Panama City - Panama, September 28 - 29, 2024

The Indigenous women of Latin America and the Caribbean - Abya Yala - gathered in Panama City, Panama, September 28-29, 2024, in preparation for the Sixteenth Conference of the Parties (COP 16) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), scheduled to take place in Cali - Colombia, in October 2024.

Considering that we, the Indigenous Women of Abya Yala, have a direct relationship with the Territory, Mother Earth, and Biodiversity, and our traditional knowledge is definitive for its conservation and sustainable use.

Reaffirming that the Indigenous Women of Abya Yala are the holders, protectors, defenders, and transmitters of our traditional, spiritual, and cultural knowledge and practices, all of which are intricately connected to the cosmovision and elements of Mother Earth.

Endorsing the proposals and conclusions contained in the report of the TrUA World Summit on Traditional Knowledge associated with Biodiversity, held in Bogotá, from August 26 to 29, 2024, which responds to the outcomes of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, meeting at its 12th session in Geneva from 12-16 November 2023, on Agenda Item 6 on the Development of a new program of work and institutional arrangements regarding Article 8(j) and other provisions of the Convention related to Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Reaffirming our rights over digital sequence information on genetic resources (DSI), we demand the establishment of a multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing that recognizes the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including women and youth, particularly in data governance and ensuring funding and fair and equitable distribution of both monetary and non-monetary benefits.

Considering that it is essential to have a permanent subsidiary body on Article 8(j) that can continue with the process the Working Group on Article 8(j) has been developing, in the promotion and development of international guidelines and standards that promote and protect traditional knowledge, as a basis for the conservation of biological and cultural diversity, and can establish links and coordination with other international scenarios such as those dealing with issues related to climate change, intellectual property, agrobiodiversity, culture, human rights, among others.

Therefore:

We demand to guarantee our full and effective participation as Indigenous Women with our own voice, gender and intergenerational equity, with cultural relevance and with a human rights approach, in the implementation of the new Kunming - Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, particularly in relation to, Target 23 and the Gender Action Plan, as well as in the updating and

revision of strategies, NBSAP National Biodiversity Action Plans, periodic reports to the Secretariat and other related instruments and processes.

We demand the full and effective participation of Indigenous Women and youth in the process related to the new institutional arrangements and the new Program of Work on Article 8(j) and related provisions.

Regarding Article 8(j) institutional arrangements:

We strongly advocate for the creation of a Permanent Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) and related provisions, with the autonomy to work on Article 8(j), within the framework of the implementation of the decisions and practices of the Convention, to strengthen the knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and in particular Indigenous women and youth.

Regarding the Implementation of the new Program of Work on Article 8(j):

- **Element 1:** By 2025, Task 1.1, should develop guidelines for recognizing Indigenous territories as biodiversity conservation areas, alongside Task 1.2, with the full participation of Indigenous women, as these tasks are interrelated and urgent.
- **Element 2:** From 2024, the Parties must implement Tasks 2.2 to 2.4, which relate to the customary use of biodiversity from the perspective of Indigenous women.
- **Element 3:** The Permanent Subsidiary Body should develop a plan outlined in Task 3.1, since benefit-sharing from the use of traditional knowledge does not have an instrument for its implementation, and this particularly affects Indigenous women as holders and guardians of traditional knowledge. We require guarantees for our specific rights as Indigenous women, especially regarding free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), and equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources, in alignment with the Nagoya Protocol and the ISD, to meet our community needs and uphold our life plans

Regarding Task 3.2, it is important to develop capacity building programs related to: the development of biocultural community protocols, knowledge sharing platforms, technical and legal support, dialogue and collaboration between users and providers to ensure clear guidelines for fair and equitable benefit sharing.

- **Element 4:** Concerning task 4.1, the Parties should implement, from 2024 to 2030, policies to preserve and revitalize traditional knowledge including Indigenous languages, through strategies such as community communication, dialogues, workshops, forums, conferences, national and international summits.

Task 4.2 requires urgent action to implement the joint CBD-UNESCO work, and to recognize the preponderant role of Indigenous women and their spiritual strength in the relationship between nature and culture.

Tasks 4.3 and 4.4 must ensure the integration of traditional knowledge with the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, including women, in the composition and processes of the different bodies.

Task 4.7 guarantees the full and effective participation of Indigenous women in the dialogues of knowledge at different scales, as holders and transmitters of knowledge, ensuring the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples.

Task 4.8 calls for the Secretariat to develop and design communication and training materials in Indigenous languages, culturally tailored and developed with the participation of women knowledge holders and transmitters of knowledge, involving young people and respecting FPIC.

- **Element 5:** We propose that implementation of the CBD voluntary guidelines begin in 2024, with a review of the Glossary of Terms in 2025.
- **Element 6:** In relation to Task 6.2, it is essential to expressly include the participation of Indigenous women and girls, thus: “To ensure the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, **including women and girls from these Peoples and communities, [...].**”
- **Element 7:** By 2027, the new subsidiary body, must implement Tasks 7.1 and 7.2, recognizing the fundamental role of Indigenous women in the protection, conservation, and defense of their territories and Mother Nature; therefore, we emphasize guaranteeing their specific rights and their full and effective participation, taking into account the relevant international instruments.
- **Element 8:** Regarding Task 8.1, by 2024, direct financial resources must be mobilized for Indigenous Peoples, especially women, for which institutional and organizational capacity building is required.

Task 8.2, by 2027, the Subsidiary Body should create direct financial mechanisms for Indigenous women supporting the development of the Program of Work on Article 8(j)

We, as women, live in our territories, in the mud, where we interrelate with the animals, the plants, the bugs, and that is how we conserve biodiversity

Margarita Hernández, Tsotsil People

