



IPACC Statement to COP 15

IPACC WORKSHOP
KINGS CONFERENCE CENTRE
BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI

26 – 27 October 2009



Preamble

The Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC) is composed of 155 community based indigenous peoples' organisations in 22 African countries. Delegates from forest-based communities in Central and East Africa gathered in Bujumbura, Burundi from 26 to 27 October, to articulate an opinion and statement with regards to climate change, adaptation and mitigation which will be presented on behalf of members at the 15th Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, due to meet in Copenhagen Denmark in December 2009.



- Considering our historic and traditional relationship with the land, natural resources, fauna and flora which has been the basis of both our material and spiritual life since time immemorial;
- Considering our historic role and duty as stewards and conservationists of nature and natural resources;
- Considering our rich traditional knowledge of biodiversity and natural climate variance;
- Considering the threats posed by extractive industries to ecosystems in Africa, notably the overuse of desert aquifers which threaten oases;
- Deeply concerned about the present and future instability of the global climate;
- Being front-line victims of the impact of global warming.

We the Indigenous People of Africa, drawn from Eastern, Central, Western, Southern, and North Africa, **brought together** by our distinct economic and cultural practices such as hunting, gathering, nomadic and transhumant pastoralism, **and experiencing** political and economic marginalisation due to our identity, **hereby declare:**

- Our willingness to contribute to finding solutions and common ground for humanity and life on Earth at COP15;
- To make available our traditional knowledge, cultural resources and values related to the sustained conservation of biodiversity through adaptation and mitigation;
- Our openness to working with new technologies in combination with our traditional knowledge, skills and competences;
- And to claim our rights to full and effective participation in multilateral negotiations and procedures related to climate change, adaptation and mitigation.



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Adaptation

We affirm and recommend the following:

- Adaptation to climate change needs to be embedded in all African national development planning;
- COP15 and the African Union should apply their minds to revitalising and consolidating the National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs) which form a valuable foundation for Ecosystem-based Adaptation and Community-based Adaptation;
- NAPA projects and programmes which have already been identified should be funded and put into operation as a matter of urgency, with the full participation and Free Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples;
- The UN Adaptation Fund procedures and criteria should facilitate access to funding for indigenous peoples to document, design and implement Community-based Adaptation;
- The UNFCCC, in cooperation with other UN bodies and the African States, should elaborate, support and implement a programme of work that strengthens the complementarity of traditional ecological knowledge with new technologies and adaptation approaches, drawing together science and oral culture and knowledge systems;
- All efforts must be made to improve communication between regional, sub-regional and national meteorological agencies and indigenous peoples and vulnerable local communities;
- GEF, UNDP and related funding bodies should support transfer of appropriate geo-spatial information technologies which improve the ability of indigenous peoples and vulnerable local communities to document and promote their knowledge of natural and human adaptation (GIT includes participatory GIS mapping, Cybertracker technology and related ICTs);
- Strengthen and support the UNDP Small Project funding of Community-based Adaptation in Africa;
- Best practices of Community-based and Ecosystem-based Adaptation should be shared and promoted widely.

Mitigation

We urge the global community to urgently commit to climate change mitigation measures.

REDD plus poses a grave challenge to the rights and livelihoods of Indigenous People. We however recognise that if done correctly, REDD plus presents opportunities that will impact positively on the rights of Indigenous People for a long time to come. It is therefore important that *REDD is anchored in a rights-based approach to affirm, secure and maintain the rights of Indigenous People.*

Further, we urge that mitigation should not just be reliant on market financing. Annex 1 developed countries should pool resources in a fund that will be accessible to both governments and Indigenous People who have successfully undertaken REDD projects without necessarily going to the market.

REDD plus financing, both market and donor supported, should be made available to African Protected Areas (see additional IPACC Statement on Protected Areas, Adaptation and Mitigation).

Conservation and sustainable management of forests should be undertaken by indigenous peoples – we affirm the principle of Community-based Mitigation.

Mitigation should also recognise the value of protecting grazing lands and carbon sequestration in sub-humid and arid areas through the sustainable conservation of plant biodiversity, water sources, traditional transhumant human practices and reforestation .

Transhumance and nomadic pastoralism and hunting-gathering should be recognised as important elements in adaptation and mitigation strategies and actions. The land rights of nomadic peoples should be recognised in African law within this context.

