

UNEA-7 Theme: Advancing Sustainable Solutions for a Resilient Planet

Submission of Initial Inputs for shaping the Ministerial Declaration of the UNEA -7

We, Indigenous Peoples and Their Communities Major Group would like to take an opportunity to provide our written initial inputs to the UNEA-7 Ministerial Declaration and contribute to shaping the zero draft of the declaration with key priorities that reflect our inherent relationship with nature, holistic customary governance approaches, and solutions grounded on Indigenous Knowledge, Science, Practices and Rights.

Guiding Questions:

1. What are the most important elements and or key messages to take forward the UNEA theme in the most impactful manner?
 - Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Science and Practices based on the Indigenous land, water, forest, territories and resources are the most important elements holding sustainable solutions for a resilient planet which come under the right to self-determination as enshrined by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Hence, recognition, respect, protection and adoption of the Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Science and Practices are the fundamental pillars to take forward the UNEA theme in the most impactful manner.
 - Guarantee the rights of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) at Indigenous ancestral territories to prevent land dispossession, destructive development projects, extractive industrial activities and corporate captures to take forward the UNEA theme in the most impactful manner.
2. What key messages or conclusions from recent scientific reports could be considered in the ministerial declaration?
 - The Ministerial Declaration must explicitly guarantee and commit to addressing human rights violence against Indigenous environmental defenders, ensuring legal protection, access to justice, and accountability for human rights violations.
 - Guarantee the rights to equal and equitable participation in and access to funding, technical resources, and decision-making bodies to enable Indigenous-led conservation and sustainable resource management initiatives.
3. What proposed collective actions or policy solutions should be adopted to advance the UNEA theme and promote effective and inclusive environmental governance?
 - Recognition, respect and protection of collective tenure rights of Indigenous Peoples on their ancestral land, territories and resources and exercise of their customary institutions

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- The Declaration should ensure an establishment of direct financial mechanisms that ensure Indigenous Peoples, and their representative organizations can access international climate, biodiversity, and environmental funds without intermediaries and any kind of legal or political impediments such as sanctions or Unilateral Coercive Measures.
- It must align financial commitments with the Sharm El-Sheikh Joint Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security and the GBF Resource Mobilization Strategy, ensuring Indigenous solutions receive sustained and predictable funding.
- The Declaration should recognize that peace is critical to inclusive environmental governance. Therefore, prevent and end violence and armed conflicts affecting Indigenous Peoples and ensure the protection of the right to live and other human and humanitarian rights of Indigenous Peoples in armed conflict-affected areas.

4. Any other messages that should be included.

- We request clarification on the reasons for any reluctance to accept or implement this declaration, as well as any obstacles that may prevent effective enforcement. Understanding the underlying concerns or challenges is critical for fostering a constructive dialogue and ensuring that all perspectives are considered as we work towards a mutually respected declaration.

Thank you

Indigenous Peoples and Their Communities Major Group

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