



Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Part Two)

7 - 19 December 2022
Montreal, Canada

Agenda item.1 Opening of the meeting (07.12.202)

Statement on behalf of the **International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB)** delivered by **John Cheechoo, Assembly of First Nation (AFN), Kenneth Deer Indigenous World Association**

I speak on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB). We pay our respects to the Mohawk Indigenous peoples and their traditional lands on which we stand.

Our world is in a crisis and we need to act now to ensure that species extinction and decline is halted and reversed. It is undisputed that Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC), including IPLC women, are the most effective protectors of biodiversity and that we continue to play important roles in meeting the objectives of the Convention. Our full and effective participation in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework rests on the recognition and protection of our rights and in ensuring that enabling conditions are in place. Participation of IPLC women must be ensured from an approach of equal and complementary relations between women and men based on our vision and culture.

Our knowledge and contributions are essential across the framework. For this reason, it is crucial that references to human rights, especially IPLC rights, in key goals, targets and sections. Section B covering fundamental principles and approaches needs concrete language on our collective rights, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), other international human rights instruments, and our right to land, waters and territories.

We welcome the work done by SBSTTA-24 and the Bonn expert meeting on indicators, particularly the inclusion of potential headline indicators on land tenure and on traditional occupations. Further work is required on indicators related to linguistic and cultural diversity, and on full and equitable participation in environmental decision-making. Indicators related to IPLC-led conservation; customary sustainable use; free, prior and informed consent; community protocols and direct funding for IPLCs are additional gaps.

We reiterate the need for a clear COP15 decision on increasing the amount of resources going directly to IPLCs. This will ensure that our actions that contribute to meeting the objectives of the Convention and the GBF are fully supported and resourced.

The decision to convene an Expert Group on the institutional arrangements and new work program of the Article 8(j) Working Group must be adopted.

We need a solution to the issue of digital sequence information that ensures our rights to our traditional knowledge and to genetic resources on our lands, including FPIC before our genetic sequences are deposited in databases. A global mechanism must incorporate our participation in its governance and provide substantial benefits for the custodians and stewards of biodiversity.

Thank you Mr Chair.