

Agenda item 6 Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered the the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues

Mr. Chair, on behalf of the Tribal Link Foundation, I thank you for this opportunity to address Agenda Item, future work of the Permanent Forum.

As many in this room are aware, the devastation and hardship caused by the global coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) has made it clear that there is critical need to address the historic and ongoing threats to terrestrial and other ecosystems. Human activity has altered 75 percent of the earth's surface, reducing habitable areas for wildlife, increasing biodiversity loss, and impacting fragile, inter-dependent environmental conditions that are essential to providing oxygen, regulating climate and weather patterns, pollinating crops, and food production.

Unsustainable natural resource exploitation and agricultural activity, as well as short-sighted human settlement patters, among other factors, continue to stress the global commons and provide increased opportunities for pathogens to be transmitted from wild animals to people. In 2016, UNEP reported that 75 per cent of all emerging infectious diseases in humans are zoonotic and that these zoonotic diseases are closely interlinked with the health of ecosystems. Growing evidence also suggests that outbreaks or epidemic diseases may become more frequent as climate continues to change. The effects of human activities on the environment are undeniable and the well-being and health of Indigenous Peoples and all life on earth is inextricably interlinked and interdependent with the existence of a healthy environment.

In 2021, the Human Rights Council (HRC) recognized the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and invited the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to consider the matter at a broader organizational level later this year.

Tribal Link Foundation recommends that the Forum's Final report of 2022 should recognize and welcome the HRC's October 8, 2021 Resolution 48/13, and also call on the UNGA to consider reaffirming and reenforcing the human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment at a broader organizational level.

In addition, Tribal Link also recommends that the Forum consider an agenda item and or an expert group meeting on Indigenous Peoples and the right to a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment at its next session.

Mr. Chair, the Permanent Forum needs to be bold and should make it clear that reconciling our relationship with nature - terrestrial and other ecosystems - will lead to a healthy environment that will improve global human health and the lives of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Thank you.

Victor Lopez Carmen