

Environmental Planning Cooperation of UN Members with Indigenous Peoples Benefits All

Southeast Indigenous Peoples have been sustainable developers of our lands for millennia and necessarily attended the 19th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development to address the impact of extraction and manufacture industries in the Southeast, including nuclear armament and power.

Cadmium and other contaminants recently found in the Gulf of Mexico and in many southeast rivers contribute to toxin bio-accumulation in marine and human life but the US will not discuss ways indigenous governments can work with the US to mitigate such contamination or plan long- and short-term remedies to the current situation. The Savannah River suffers from US radioactive poisoning, the US has poured so much waste into Godsrive that it kills fish and dolphins, and the US has promoted the destruction of the Mobile and related Rivers to the point it has become a toxic cesspool, all of which flows to the sea. The ocean grows more acidic and fisheries and migratory channels have become too dangerous for our water neighbors to navigate in the Southeast. This occurs because US developers will not go through the productive process of obtaining Free Prior and Informed Consent of indigenous governments, which would have enforced precautions protecting humans and the ecosystems and would have averted the deaths and injuries to humans, wildlife, and the southeast ecosystem caused by the BP oil discharge into the Gulf.

At CSD 19 Indigenous Peoples primarily focused on Mining but also participated in other topics: Waste, Sustainable Consumption and Production, and Transport, and Chemicals. We promoted Free Prior and Informed Consent especially for extractive industries and proposed a financial accountability mechanism that would prohibit abandonment and ensure extended producer responsibility for the cradle to cradle life-cycle of operations and materials, including all pre- and post-consumer waste from extraction and manufacture industries. SIPC promoted the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples' governments in sustainable transport planning and negotiations, including development of alternative fuel supplies, renewable energy, and electric grid support.

Indigenous Peoples worked with other NGOs and major groups to protect Indigenous and neighboring Peoples by requiring importers to obtain Prior Informed Consent from indigenous governments prior to the introduction of the 31 "severely restricted chemicals" into our ancestral ecosystems. Unfortunately, participation in CSD 19 was severely limited for Major Groups with the total Indigenous Peoples' speaking time in all topics and plenaries for the 10-day Commission amounting to approximately 10 minutes.

Indigenous Peoples were also able to support Women who proposed that the CSD consider human rights solutions to the rape and murder of those who resist unsustainable development. Indigenous Peoples continue to work with other NGOs who recognize that mechanisms must be developed to protect vulnerable communities from the violent power exercised over those who protect our ecosystems.

The handful of Indigenous Peoples' representatives at CSD, and especially Tebtebba, identified for NGOs the benefits UN Members gain from the process of Free Prior and Informed Consent as traditional indigenous methods of observation, review, and community dialogue allow for many short- and long-term consequences of development to be raised for public examination and integration into government planning. Therefore SIPC asks ECOSOC to conduct case studies showing the impact on UN Members of their cooperation with the process of obtaining the Free Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples' government. We further ask ECOSOC to support Indigenous Peoples participation in CSD and Rio+20 as our wisdom promotes sustainability for all Peoples of the world.