

Agenda Item 9: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
Statement by Andrew Ambrose for PACOS Trust, East Malaysia.
Scheduled for 4 May, 10 am-1 pm

This statement is on behalf of PACOS Trust, the Global Forest Coalition, and the ICCA Consortium.

Malaysia is undergoing a Voluntary National Review this year. The federal government is preparing a national roadmap on SDGs for the High Level Political Forum in July. Indigenous peoples' organisations in Malaysia are working to provide inputs to this process, with representation from the three main regions of Sabah, Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia.

From 11-13 April 2017, PACOS Trust and AIPP hosted a workshop on the SDGs and Indigenous Peoples in Malaysia. Attended by more than 50 Indigenous representatives from all three regions, participants discussed the 17 SDGs and the role of Indigenous peoples. They produced a position paper for the lead government agency, underscoring that Indigenous peoples must be included in the mantra of "leaving no one behind".

The position paper highlights a number of issues, including: recognition of native customary rights and the rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination; transparency of development plans and information; participation and consultation of Indigenous peoples in decision-making processes; multidimensional poverty reduction measures; recognition of small-scale and subsistence economic activities; re-evaluation of definitions (such as dams as 'clean energy') and out-dated racial classifications; culturally appropriate aid and support; and more inclusive school curricula. The position paper also calls for recognition of traditional knowledge and territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and communities (ICCAs); the necessity of environmental and social safeguards; protection against bio-piracy; and ensuring fair and equitable sharing of benefits.

The workshop participants also recommended that the SDG process be consulted in all three regions of Malaysia to ensure: full participation, gender assessments and proper evaluation of conditions on the ground; the use of data disaggregation and Indigenous and citizen science to complement government data; and full compliance with FPIC, environmental impact assessments, safeguards, and protection of rights under international instruments such as the UNDRIP and CBD.

Following from previous recommendations of the Permanent Forum on data disaggregation, we invite the Malaysian government to work with national and state-level Indigenous peoples' organisations to document their unique contributions to the SDGs. We also encourage the government to understand that an important 'translation' process is required to document and communicate Indigenous worldviews in ways that "fit" into national and global indicators.

More broadly, Indigenous peoples contribute in many ways not only to the SDGs but also to other international commitments such as the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. We call on the Convention Secretariats, UN mechanisms concerning Indigenous peoples and the SDG process to ensure that the collective actions of Indigenous peoples are recognised in national reports and global assessments across the entire UN system.