

# Fortalecer el Papel de las Mujeres Indígenas en la Conservación de la Naturaleza

**Octava Sesión del Foro Permanente de Naciones Unidas sobre Cuestiones Indígenas. Nueva York, 18-29 mayo de 2009**

## **Tema 3 (b) del Programa Provisional – Mujeres Indígenas**

Señora Presidenta:

Es un gran honor para mí dirigirme a esta reunión del Foro Permanente, en nombre de la Unión Internacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, la UICN. Quisiera empezar felicitándoles por el excelente trabajo de preparación de esta discusión relacionada con las mujeres indígenas.

El papel de las mujeres indígenas es de gran importancia en el área de la conservación de la biodiversidad, los ecosistemas y los recursos de los que dependen los pueblos y las comunidades indígenas, ya que ellas son guardianas y transmisoras del conocimiento y la cultura ancestral, y actoras principales en el manejo de los recursos naturales; sin embargo, las mujeres indígenas suelen estar en desventaja, marginadas y con falta de oportunidades. Además son especialmente vulnerables a las consecuencias del deterioro de la naturaleza y los efectos del cambio climático, por ejemplo en cuanto a carencia de agua, inseguridad alimentaria, y fenómenos extremos debidos al cambio climático.

La UICN tiene una trayectoria larga de interesarse por la situación de las comunidades humanas, en particular de los pueblos indígenas, y también por la equidad de género en temas ambientales. La UICN reconoce que la equidad e igualdad de género son asuntos fundamentales de los derechos humanos y la justicia social, y una precondition para el desarrollo sostenible y el logro de su misión.

La política de la UICN sobre pueblos indígenas en relación con la conservación de la naturaleza se basa en el reconocimiento y apoyo a sus derechos e intereses, y de su contribución a la conservación de la diversidad biológica. Dentro de este enfoque, la UICN tiene un especial interés en promover la equidad e igualdad de las mujeres indígenas como factor crucial e integral de los esfuerzos de conservación, incluyendo en aspectos como el acceso a y uso de recursos, el control de su conocimiento tradicional, el acceso a mayores beneficios y la participación en la toma de decisiones. Hay que integrar los asuntos específicos de las mujeres indígenas en la toma de decisiones y en la investigación relacionadas a la biodiversidad; también hay que incluir las perspectivas y los derechos humanos de estas mujeres en cuestiones como el acceso a la tierra y a otros recursos naturales y su uso, la resolución de conflictos, la seguridad alimenticia durante condiciones económicas y climáticas difíciles, etc.

Señora Presidenta:

Es necesario valorar e incrementar las capacidades de las mujeres indígenas para promocionar su participación en la toma de decisiones relacionadas a la biodiversidad y ejercitar sus derechos. Por esta razón la UICN trabaja activamente a diferentes escalas para apoyar el fortalecimiento y la participación de las mujeres indígenas en la conservación de la biodiversidad.

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IUCN, the International Union  
for Conservation of Nature,  
helps the world find pragmatic  
solutions to our most pressing  
environment and development  
challenges by supporting  
scientific research; managing  
field projects all over the world;  
and bringing governments,  
NGOs, the UN, international  
conventions and companies  
together to develop policy,  
laws and best practice.

IUCN is the world's oldest and  
largest global environmental  
network. IUCN is a democratic  
union with more than 1,000  
government and NGO member  
organizations, and some  
10,000 volunteer scientists in  
more than 150 countries.  
IUCN's work is supported by  
1,100 professional staff in 62  
countries and hundreds of  
partners in public, NGO and  
private sectors around the  
world.

El Programa de Equidad de Género de la UICN ha venido colaborando con el Secretariado del Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica (CDB) en varias actividades para fortalecer el papel de las mujeres indígenas en la aplicación del Convenio. El año pasado, el Secretariado de la CDB y la UICN convocaron un taller con representantes de comunidades indígenas y locales, expertos y expertas de género, y representantes de agencias de las Naciones Unidas, con el objetivo de identificar los principales vínculos entre el enfoque de equidad e igualdad de género y la biodiversidad, además de determinar cuál sería el papel del CDB en garantizar la igualdad entre los géneros. Los participantes prepararon conjuntamente un análisis de la integración de temas de género en el Convenio, y desarrollaron un Plan de Acción de Género que fue aprobado en la Conferencia de las Partes del CDB en mayo de 2008 en Bonn. Además convocaron otro taller específicamente para la capacitación de mujeres indígenas acerca de los procesos del CDB y la participación en la Conferencia de las Partes. Este taller ayudó a las mujeres a conocer los principales temas que se discutirían y les permitió elaborar sus posiciones y declaraciones para la COP 9 del CDB.

En su trabajo regional sobre pueblos indígenas en América Latina, la UICN está especialmente comprometida a fortalecer la presencia y el liderazgo de las mujeres indígenas. La UICN brinda apoyo técnico a la Red Latinoamericana de Mujeres Indígenas sobre Biodiversidad, y las apoyó en su participación en el Congreso Mundial para la Naturaleza en Octubre de 2008. Además pone énfasis en la importancia de asegurar una mayor representación de

mujeres indígenas en una variedad de eventos y actividades.

Una serie de talleres nacionales de la UICN en países de Meso América permitió compartir experiencias entre mujeres de distintos pueblos indígenas, identificar su situación y sus necesidades, e identificar acciones para mejorar su calidad de vida y fortalecer su capacidad e incidencia en la toma de decisiones. De estas actividades surgió una publicación que contiene resultados importantes que se están incluyendo en una agenda regional. En Junio de 2009, la UICN, en colaboración con organizaciones indígenas de Meso América, realizará un taller específicamente sobre cambio climático y mujeres indígenas en Honduras.

Señora Presidenta:

La UICN reitera la necesidad de fortalecer e integrar la equidad e igualdad de género en todas las áreas de conservación y desarrollo sostenible, y la necesidad de valorar e incrementar las capacidades de las mujeres indígenas para que puedan participar mejor en la toma de decisiones relacionadas con la biodiversidad y los recursos naturales y logren mejores resultados en el respeto a sus derechos, la reducción de la pobreza y el mejoramiento de la calidad de vida de ellas, sus familias y comunidades. La UICN va a continuar contribuyendo a este tema y apoyando a sus miembros y contrapartes para contribuir desde su misión a estos objetivos, y sobre todo a la mejor integración de las mujeres indígenas en los procesos de toma de decisiones.

Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta.



## **ANNEX 1:**

### **Submission of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNPFII**

**New York City, 18 May 2009**

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## **Presentation**

This document provides an overview of IUCN's main activities related to indigenous issues since the 7<sup>th</sup> session of the UNPFII in May 2008. It is organized around two main themes: the 4th World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, October 2008); and indigenous issues in the IUCN's conservation programme, with highlights on climate change, indigenous women, indigenous peoples and protected areas, sacred natural sites, and rights-based approaches to ecosystem management.

### **1. Indigenous Peoples at the 4th World Conservation Congress**

#### **1. 1 Overview of the Congress and Indigenous Peoples Issues**

The quadrennial IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) is among the world's largest and most important conservation events. Its Forum provides a unique space for exchange between IUCN member organizations, Commissions, Secretariat, indigenous and local communities, UN Agencies, governments, private business, and others. Its Members' Assembly adopts resolutions and recommendations that guide the work of IUCN, including the approval of IUCN's programme of work and the election of President and members of IUCN's Council.

The Congress is also of great importance for indigenous peoples' issues. Ever since the First Congress held in 1996, indigenous issues have been an important part of the discussions and decisions.

This was reflected in several elements of IUCN's 4th World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 5-14 October 2008), which addressed the overall theme 'A diverse and sustainable world'. IUCN invited participants to broaden the perspective of diversity when looking for a vision and solutions for a sustainable future, including diverse cultural aspects such as indigenous peoples' perspectives and wisdom.

One of the 12 "journeys" which guided participants through Forum Events of related themes specifically addressed the issue of "Bio-Cultural Diversity and Indigenous Peoples". It linked more than 60 activities of different event formats, with about 54 of them being closely related to indigenous peoples' issues.

Moreover, a range of formal and informal meetings provided an important space for exchange of indigenous peoples' issues and for advancing related agendas.

The Congress was also shaped by the active participation of a high number of indigenous peoples' representatives in the discussions and presentations. An estimated number of 200 indigenous participants from more than 50 countries from all continents took part.

## 2.2 Main Themes, Outcomes and Issues Related to Indigenous Peoples at the Congress Forum

Key issues related to indigenous peoples that were highlighted and advanced during the Congress Forum include the following topics:

- A specific advance was the integration of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in most of the discussions and in several Congress decisions related to indigenous peoples. The 4th WCC provided prime space for exchanges on how to translate the Declaration into practice. It was repeatedly emphasized that the UNDRIP should be a guiding policy framework for conservation work taking place in the lands, territories and resources of indigenous peoples.
- The Journey highlighted in several events the importance of indigenous governance of, and the rights to, lands, territories and resources in protected areas. The discussions substantially advanced greater understanding of indigenous governance and a wider recognition of the value of indigenous peoples' territories and conservation practices.
- IUCN launched new *Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories* at the Congress, which reflect various new features relevant to indigenous peoples. The guidelines adopt a new definition of protected areas that is inclusive of cultural values, and encourage the application of governance approaches for protected areas across all the categories that recognize the role of indigenous peoples and local communities as managers of their lands, territories and resources, and establishes the model of Indigenous Conservation Territories as a legitimate form of protected area governance.
- The Congress enhanced growing understanding and recognition of sacred natural sites and the roles and rights of their custodians. It was shown how sacred natural sites and indigenous peoples' and community areas can maintain high levels of biodiversity and ecosystem services, as well as providing essential cultural and spiritual values. With the launch of the best practice guidelines *Sacred Natural Sites – Guidelines for Protected Area Managers*, conservation initiatives were asked to further recognize and encourage sacred natural sites.
- The Journey further emphasized that indigenous women play a key role in the conservation of biodiversity and the protection and transmission of culture within their societies, and that further work and more efforts are needed in order for their rights to be acknowledged and reinforced.
- Climate change featured as another prominent topic, and the Journey provided also a space for dialogue on the role and rights of indigenous people and local communities in climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the ways in which traditional practices and knowledge can contribute to this. Discussions emphasized that traditional ecological knowledge needs to be recognized as a valuable contribution to problem solving and that it needs to be seen on equal ground to contemporary science so that the two types of knowledge can be used

together and realize their combined potential for providing solutions. Furthermore it was noted that policies need to include cultural elements and help increase resilience and adaptive capacities of indigenous peoples. Several sessions provided a space for discussions on potential benefits and impacts of mitigation and adaptation mechanisms on indigenous peoples. Many concerns were raised with regard to REDD (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation) and it was emphasized that the benefits from REDD need to reach the local stewards of natural areas, and that representatives of indigenous peoples need to play a more direct role in the design and implementation of climate change mitigation schemes, by participating on equal terms at REDD deliberations.

- The important theme of a rights-based approach to conservation was addressed more broadly through another specific Journey on “Rights and Conservation”. There was consensus that rights and responsibilities are linked and that rights-based approaches to conservation present a useful framework for better integrating social considerations conservation. It was also evident that further work is needed to clarify and operationalize these approaches. Specific issues discussed with regard to indigenous peoples included also the challenges of addressing the intra-generational justice dilemma posed by climate change and the importance of securing land and resource rights for indigenous peoples.

### **1. 3 Congress Resolutions and Recommendations Relevant to Indigenous Peoples**

Many resolutions and recommendations adopted by the Members’ Assembly at the 4th WCC are relevant for indigenous peoples and will further guide the work of IUCN. Highlights of relevant resolutions and recommendations include:

#### **1. Implementing the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)**

This was the first IUCN World Conservation Congress convened since the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the UN General Assembly in 2007, and therefore the Declaration was highly profiled. Various resolutions of the 4th WCC make reference to the UNDRIP, with Resolution 4.052 being specifically dedicated to its implementation. The WCC endorsed the UNDRIP and called on IUCN members to endorse or adopt the Declaration.

#### **2. Indigenous peoples, protected areas and indigenous conservation territories**

Various resolutions and recommendations reminded of provisions in previous IUCN resolutions, the Durban Accord, the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas, and the UNDRIP regarding the rights of indigenous peoples in relation to protected areas, and called on IUCN members and international agencies to revise their policies and programmes in order to ensure consistency. Resolutions 4.049 and 4.050 specifically called on IUCN and relevant actors to promote and support recognition of Indigenous Conservation Territories (ICTs) as a legitimate model of governance of protected areas superimposed over the territories of indigenous peoples, as well as to acknowledge other Indigenous Peoples’ and Community Conserved Areas (IPCCAs) and their conservation significance, whilst ensuring indigenous peoples’ free, prior and informed consent and full consultation before including such areas into national

systems. Furthermore, the resolutions called on IUCN's members to support the fair restitution of territorial, land and natural resources rights, and to support indigenous peoples to protect their ICTs and IPCCAs against external threats.

### **3. Sacred Natural Sites**

Resolution 4.038 is specifically dedicated to the recognition and conservation of sacred natural sites in protected areas. It affirms that “urgent action is needed for culturally appropriate sacred natural site conservation and management within (and near) official protected areas”. It calls on government agencies and NGOs to recognize the rights, skills and knowledge that local and indigenous custodians have in managing sacred natural sites. It further calls on government agencies, NGOs and conservation agencies to work with and support traditional and indigenous communities and custodians to directly confront threats affecting sacred natural sites by improving their management and by adopting effective laws and policies that protect the biological and cultural integrity of the sites.

### **4. Climate Change and REDD**

Resolution 4.068 recognizes the concerns of indigenous peoples in relation to REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). It urges all IUCN members and all Parties to the UNFCCC to ensure that national and sub-national initiatives for REDD ensure equitable participation of forest dependent communities and indigenous peoples with particular emphasis on securing rights, land tenures, livelihood benefits and poverty reduction, and the provision of substantial incentives for reducing and reversing deforestation and the degradation of indigenous ecosystems, especially forest ecosystems. Furthermore it urges to ensure equitable sharing of benefits and costs between agencies of government and forest communities, and within forest communities; and to apply effective social safeguards to protect the rights of indigenous peoples.

### **5. Rights-Based Approach**

Resolution 4.056 calls on IUCN and its members and partners to advance work on understanding, developing, and implementing rights-based approaches (RBAs) to conservation. It specifically calls to ensure respect for, and where possible further fulfilment of human rights, tenure and resource access rights, and/or customary rights of indigenous peoples and local communities in conservation policies, programmes, projects, and related activities. It also asks IUCN and its Commissions to further engage with representative of indigenous peoples and other partners in this respect.

**Overview of Resolutions and Recommendations adopted at the IUCN 4th World Conservation Congress which are of specific importance to indigenous peoples:**

- Resolution 4.033: Arctic legal regime for conservation
- Resolution 4.038: Recognition and conservation of sacred natural sites in protected areas
- Resolution 4.041: Following up on actions called for by the 2nd Latin American Congress on Protected Areas and Other Protected Areas (Bariloche, 2007)
- Resolution 4.047: Empowering local communities to conserve and manage natural resources in Africa
- Resolution 4.048: Indigenous peoples, protected areas and implementation of the Durban Accord
- Resolution 4.049: Supporting indigenous conservation territories and other indigenous peoples' and community conservation areas
- Resolution 4.050: Recognition of indigenous conservation territories
- Resolution 4.051: Indigenous rights and protected areas of la Mosquitia in Mesoamerica
- Resolution 4.052: Implementing the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Resolution 4.053: Mobile Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity Conservation
- Resolution 4.055: Integrating culture and cultural diversity into IUCN's policy and Programme
- Resolution 4.056: Rights-based approaches to conservation
- Resolution 4.068: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)
- Resolution 4.099: Recognition of the diversity of concepts and values of nature
- Recommendation 4.127: Indigenous peoples' rights in the management of protected areas fully or partially in the territories of Indigenous Peoples
- Recommendation 4.136: Biodiversity, protected areas, indigenous peoples and mining activities

The full text of all resolutions and recommendations from the 4th WCC is available from [http://www.iucn.org/congress\\_08/assembly/policy/index.cfm](http://www.iucn.org/congress_08/assembly/policy/index.cfm).

#### **1.4 Indigenous leaders elected officials of IUCN's Commissions**

IUCN members elected a prominent indigenous leader, Ms Aroha Te Pareake Mead, from the Ngati Awa and Ngati Porou tribes (Maori) of the North Island of Aotearoa, New Zealand, as the new Chair of its Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP). She has a long-standing record in environment and development issues, particularly in relation to indigenous peoples and local community rights.

TILCEPA (Theme on Governance, Communities, Equity and Livelihood Rights in Relation to Protected Areas), a joint initiative of IUCN's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) and IUCN's World Commission of Protected Areas (WCPA), is now co-chaired by two leaders of indigenous peoples' organizations, Ms Jannie Lasimbang from the Asia Indigenous People Pact Foundation (who is also a member of the United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, EMRIP), and Mr Nigel Crawhall, Director of the Secretariat of the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC). Mr Li Bo, from the Bai indigenous people from North Western Yunnan in China, became co-chair of CEESP's Theme on Governance, Equity, and Rights (TGER).



The elected officials have advanced networking and discussions with many experts, including indigenous experts, in areas of their mandate, and are planning new actions and initiatives to support consideration of indigenous peoples' rights in conservation.

## **2. Indigenous Peoples in the IUCN Programme**

### **2. 1 Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change**

IUCN's climate change work takes an ecosystem-based approach and puts emphasis on understanding the links between social and ecosystem vulnerability, and developing conceptual and policy guidance to address climate change mitigation and adaptation from a perspective of rights and equity.

Within the last year, IUCN's work has specifically included discussions on climate change and justice, climate change adaptation and traditional knowledge and practices, climate change and human rights, equitable benefit-sharing and land rights under REDD, and inclusion of gender considerations in the UNFCCC framework. Such topics were also on the table at the 4th WCC.

IUCN's work on REDD specifically looks into ensuring that initiatives providing incentives are carried out with full social safeguards to protect the interests and rights of indigenous peoples and to pursue policies and mechanisms to secure the land and resource rights of indigenous peoples. IUCN is working with a range of partners to support integration of standards and safeguards on social equity and the rights of indigenous peoples and communities.

IUCN is exploring the ways and options to apply a rights-based approach across its programme, including climate change related work. This is currently under further discussion and development, and IUCN is planning to involve indigenous leaders and networks in collaborative work in this regard.

IUCN is providing inputs to member and partner institutions on the application of rights-based approaches in climate change related work, putting special emphasis on indigenous peoples' rights. IUCN has, for example, provided inputs to the analytical study of the relationship between climate change and human rights carried out by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and, at the request of the European Union, a briefing paper on indigenous peoples and climate change for the European Parliament.

IUCN emphasizes that indigenous peoples face specific challenges as a consequence of climate change and related policy response measures. It notes that indigenous peoples are amongst the most vulnerable to climate change impacts, yet contribute the least and often lack the protection of secure rights. Indigenous peoples often [have been pushed to] inhabit lands and use resources of exposed geographic areas such as forests, drylands, the Arctic, near-sea-level regions such as small islands, and high mountain ecosystems, which are particularly affected by climate change<sup>1</sup>. As

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<sup>1</sup> See i.e. Macchi *et al.* (2008): *Indigenous and Traditional Peoples and Climate Change - Issues paper*. IUCN.

indigenous peoples are often highly dependent on their lands and natural resources for their livelihoods, they are also particularly vulnerable to the climate change impacts. They often have their own adaptation strategies – for example, mobile peoples often used large areas to increase their resilience; but their access to their lands has been reduced over the years by outside development. The vulnerability of their geographic location is further exacerbated by factors such as insecurity of rights to lands, territories and resources, weak governance systems that do not respect their institutions and customary law, and lack of information and full and effective participation in decision-making institutions and processes including in current discussions and design of mitigation and adaptation measures even in cases where the areas they inhabit are being considered for application of such measures. This makes it fundamental to address indigenous peoples' vulnerability and to ensure that responses to climate change be rooted in an understanding of indigenous people's rights and needs as human beings and peoples. As indigenous peoples' vulnerability to climate change impacts is largely determined by the degree to which their full range of rights are recognized and secured, a rights-based approach can help reduce indigenous peoples' vulnerability and increase their resilience.

Another area of IUCN's further work on climate change and indigenous peoples will focus on sacred natural sites, as they represent reservoirs of bio-cultural diversity, sometimes remnants of once more widespread habitats on the landscape, that have persisted over long periods of time due to their resilience derived from indigenous management practices. Climate change presents a threat to these sites as they, and their associated cultures, will be at risk from the fluctuating climatic regimes and extreme weather events. At the same time many of these sites and their associated cultures have shown remarkable resilience over the years despite many and varied pressures.

IUCN is therefore aiming to support strengthening the inbuilt resilience of these sites. Areas for action include development of policy and legal frameworks, research and demonstration of case studies and the establishment of learning sites.

## **2.2. Indigenous Peoples and Gender**

IUCN sees a particular need to increase equality and equity between men and women in their access to resources, control of their traditional knowledge, and benefits from sound management and participation in governance and decision-making. The constraints, needs and preferences of indigenous women need to be integrated into biodiversity research and programme decisions. Access to land and other natural resources, land use, conflict resolution, household food security during difficult economic and climatic conditions, etc., all need to include indigenous women's perspectives and their human rights and be considered in research and decisions about biodiversity.

There is a need to value and increase the capacity of indigenous women to participate in decision-making processes like the CBD. In this regard, IUCN's Gender programme collaborated with the CBD Secretariat on activities such as a training

workshop for indigenous women to participate in CBD related processes. This supported them to prepare and elaborate their positions and declarations for CBD COP 9 in May 2008.

In January 2008, the CBD Secretariat and IUCN convened another workshop with representatives of indigenous and local communities, gender experts, and other representatives of United Nations agencies on mainstreaming gender. The workshop aimed to identify linkages between gender equity and biodiversity, the role of the CBD in guaranteeing gender equality and to determine what actions are required. Together, they prepared an analysis of the integration of gender issues in the Convention and developed a CBD Gender Plan of Action, which was approved at the Bonn CBD COP 9 in May 2009.

This plan defines the role the CBD will play in stimulating and facilitating efforts, both in-house and with partners at the national, regional and global levels, to promote gender equality and equity in the Convention process.

In its regional work on indigenous peoples in Latin America, IUCN is especially committed to strengthening indigenous women's presence and leadership. Activities include among others providing technical support to the Latin American Network on Indigenous Women and Biodiversity. Special importance is attached to ensuring high representation of indigenous women in a range of capacity building workshops. In June 2009, IUCN will hold a workshop on climate change and indigenous women in Honduras.

### **2.3. Indigenous governance and protected areas**

Governance of indigenous territories, lands and resources in protected areas has been and will continue to be an important area of work for IUCN.

IUCN launched new Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories at the 4<sup>th</sup> WCC in October 2008. The Guidelines, which involved consultations with indigenous leaders, include various new features relevant to indigenous peoples, such as a new definition of protected areas that is inclusive of cultural values. Furthermore they encourage the application of the concept of Indigenous Conservation Territories as a legitimate form of protected area governance. The guidelines are a pivotal step to further the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights in the context of protected areas, as the IUCN System of Protected Area Management Categories is recognized and used worldwide as a framework to set up and manage national systems of protected areas.

IUCN has been particularly engaged in working on this subject with indigenous leaders and networks in Latin America, through its Regional Programmes in Meso and South America. Subsequent to the II Latin American Congress on National Parks and other Protected Areas (Bariloche, 2007), where a "Strategic Alliance between Indigenous Organizations from Latin America and IUCN on Protected Areas" was formed, IUCN and the Indigenous Forum on Protected Areas from Latin America developed a common agenda for regional work. Activities under this agenda include facilitating analysis and documentation of case studies of indigenous conservation

territories (ICTs), supporting national processes for legal and policy reform, supporting experiences of indigenous governance in selected sites, developing technical guidance for implementation of models of indigenous governance of territories, lands and resources in protected areas, and helping advance this agenda at the international policy level.

IUCN Regional Programme for Meso America is supporting a process of indigenous organizations from the region to develop a Mesoamerican indigenous agenda for the decade of 2009-2019.

IUCN's regional and global policy work on indigenous peoples and protected areas is supported by TILCEPA, the joint Theme of CEESP and WCPA on Governance, Communities, Equity and Livelihoods Rights in relation to Protected Areas – a network of experts that contribute their time, knowledge and expertise to the work of IUCN in this field.

## **2.4 Integration of indigenous concerns in other thematic areas**

IUCN thematic programmes working at regional and global levels actively integrate indigenous peoples issues at different scales. For example, there is systematic consideration of the rights of indigenous and other forest-dependent peoples in the work of the Forest Conservation Programme, globally and regionally, where IUCN focuses specifically on supporting governance improvements based on the recognition and strengthening of rights, and on revitalizing and integrating traditional management systems in forest management. Activities related to Water conservation take also a rights and governance approach, including through the study and strengthening of customary water management regimes of indigenous and traditional peoples. In its Drylands programme, IUCN supports the rights of indigenous and other peoples and communities living in drylands through processes of governance change, capacity building and community empowerment. Work on such topics in IUCN's programmes is supported by the activities of its Environmental Law Programme, as well as by the programmes run by the offices of the IUCN Chief Scientist, the Senior Adviser on Gender and the Senior Adviser on Social Policy.

As previously described, IUCN Commissions on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) and World Commission of Protected Areas (WCPA) are actively involved in indigenous peoples issues and increasingly interested to support on-the-ground implementation as well as policy developments as needed. IUCN's Commission on Environmental Law (CEL) has also established a Specialist Group focusing on legal aspects of the links between indigenous peoples and conservation; other IUCN Commissions take growing interest in indigenous issues, for example on matters related to cultural practices and value systems.

Furthermore, IUCN collaborates with its members and partners on related issues. The regional office in South America works, for example, together with national Committees on the participatory development of well-being indicators which are culturally pertinent for indigenous peoples in the Andean region and based on collective rights, the Andean cosmovision and practices of adaptation to climate change and vulnerability conditions. Those indicators will be a potentially powerful tool for decision-makers as well as for indigenous communities and organizations as

they will enable them to better evaluate and follow-up on the fulfilment of their internationally and nationally recognized rights related to their living conditions and well-being.

Thus, a wide array of IUCN programmes, commissions and units, globally and regionally, are increasingly contributing to better integration of indigenous peoples issues, through a rights-based approach, to the global IUCN conservation programme. IUCN looks forward to further collaboration with indigenous leaders and networks, as well as with other institutions, in advancing this agenda.

### **3. Outlook to the future development of IUCN's activities**

The agenda adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conservation Congress will guide IUCN's work in its intersessional programme until 2012. Main areas of IUCN's work related to indigenous peoples will include:

1. Further promoting and supporting Indigenous Conservation Territories (ICTs) and Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved Areas (IPCCAs).
2. Further promoting indigenous peoples' rights and roles and the recognition of traditional knowledge in climate change adaptation and mitigation, especially related to REDD.
3. Continue to work on the empowerment of indigenous women in related issues such as biodiversity management, climate change, and participation in global environmental conventions.
4. Continue to support indigenous networks and to promote regional indigenous agendas related to conservation of their lands and territories and natural resource management, such as in the Mesoamerican region.
5. Strengthening the rights-based approach in IUCN's work related to natural resource management, especially in forest, water, and dryland areas.
6. Working together with IUCN's members in order to support the integration of a rights-based approach to indigenous peoples in the programmes of the conservation community.

#### **About IUCN**

Founded in 1948, IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) brings together States, government agencies and a diverse range of non-governmental organizations in a unique world partnership: over 1000 members in all, spread across some 160 countries.

As a Union, IUCN seeks to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

IUCN builds on the strengths of its members, networks and partners to enhance their capacity and to support global alliances to safeguard natural resources at local, regional and global levels.