

**Draft Recommendations to the 11<sup>th</sup> Session UNPFII Future Work  
On the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)**

**Statement by Tebtebba Foundation**

**Agenda Item 9. - Future Work of the UNPFII**

**Recommendations**

1. It is essential that the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues conveys a strong message on Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development on the occasion of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) as the UN body charged with a mandate addressing multiple dimensions of indigenous peoples' sustainable development.
2. This message needs to be conveyed to ECOSOC and the General Assembly, all UN bodies and development funders, as well as to governments, major groups and civil society, and all relevant actors in sustainable development.
3. The UNPFII message needs to reinforce the voices of indigenous peoples in the Rio+20 negotiations towards favourable outcomes for indigenous peoples in the high-level declaration arising from the UN Conference on Sustainable Development.
4. This message will also be highly relevant for the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (2014), which should build on the Rio+20 conference outcomes to advance indigenous peoples' sustainable and self-determined development.
5. That the UNPFII on its 12<sup>th</sup> session, decides on the special theme of ***"Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development,"*** building on the outcomes of the Rio+20 conference and leading towards WCIP (2014).

Tebtebba Foundation, as one of the organising partner of UN-DESA in the Rio+20 process, offers the following key messages for the consideration and adoption by the UNPFII, in support of indigenous peoples' key demands at Rio+20.<sup>1</sup>

1. The UNPFII affirms the integral linkages between human rights and sustainable development and the importance of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), in this regard.
2. The UNPFII underscores Indigenous Peoples' diverse local economies and livelihoods as vital contributions towards plural green economies. Conceptions of a singular green economy, reinforce the imposition of top-down, "one size fits all" development, rather than fostering economic diversity which enhances local livelihoods and occupations, alleviates poverty, and operates using participatory decision-making and governance systems.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Indigenous Peoples submission to the Rio+20 Zero Draft, and subsequent statements made to the inter-sessional preparatory meetings for Rio+20.

3. The customary rights of indigenous peoples to lands, territories and resources traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired shall be legally recognized and protected by States, with due respect for the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

State shall uphold the right to free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples and avoid, minimize and adjudicate land conflicts arising from extractive industries, large-scale water, energy and infrastructure projects, and agricultural investments, consistent with UNDRIP.

4. Cultures are ways of being and living with nature, underpinning our values, moral and ethical choices and our actions. Indigenous peoples' abiding survival is supported by our cultures, providing us with social, material, and spiritual strength. The UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) should embrace the cultural dimensions of sustainable development: the diverse cultural and spiritual values of the human family, renewed to address the contemporary global crises.
5. To address the current challenges of sustainable development, indigenous peoples call for a multi-disciplinary knowledge platform, not limited to science but valuing diverse knowledge systems including the contributions of indigenous and local knowledge in capacity-building, knowledge generation, assessments, monitoring and indicators on sustainable development.

The time-tested values of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices constitute important contributions towards addressing 21<sup>st</sup> century social, ecological and development challenges.