

United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Population
23rd Session, 2005,
Geneva, Switzerland

Theme : "Indigenous Peoples and the International and Domestic Protection of Traditional Knowledge"

Intervention by Ms. Bandana Chamling Rai,
Kirat Chamling Language Culture Development Association, Nepal

Mr./Madam, Chairperson,

Women are the primary natural resources manager therefore, they possess many knowledge about conservation of environment. The credit directly goes to women or indigenous knowledge system of biodiversity management and practice regarding the management of forest for the protection and utilization of biologically diverse resources. Women play great role in promoting and protecting the knowledge, which is inherent in their societies and in coexistence of biological and cultural diversity. Women are preserving traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources. But women's knowledge is unrecognized and remained invisible to development planners and policy makers and others.

Recognizing and respecting the indigenous women's knowledge, skills and practices for the conservation of biodiversity, development and management of natural resources and environment at the community, national and international levels, however there is:

- Lack of documentation of traditional knowledge possesses with women.
- Low status of education and awareness women among indigenous, men and non-indigenous communities
- Lack of getting opportunity and means to develop their capacity building.
- Lack of respecting and promoting the rights of women that are victimized and does not respect their rights in gender equity by government policies
- Lack of control over the decision-making role for the promotion and protection regarding their knowledge, innovation and practices
- Lack of policies and programmes to carryout any concrete action plan and consultation with Indigenous women for the conservation, promotion and protection of the traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources most notably the respecting the theme and objectives of legally binding convention on biological diversity which recognizes the vital role that women play in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.
- Lack of recognition and respect women's knowledge and is largely ignored by male members of the society and development agencies in indigenous system of biodiversity conservation and environmental management.
- Lack of appropriate policies and legislations for the promotion and protection of inherent traditional knowledge possesses with women associated with genetic resources.
- Lack of recognition and respect the theme and objectives of CBD (8j) in formulation of appropriate policies and legislation and draft bill on "access to genetic resources and benefit sharing" in Nepal.
- Lack of indigenous peoples' full and effective participation in formulating policy and legislation without any proper consultation with indigenous peoples,
- Lack of indigenous peoples' full and effective participation His Majesty's Government of Nepal is launching documenting of traditional knowledge collaboration with IUCN, Nepal that promote the biopiracy.

Recommendations: -

Capacity building is needed to raise public awareness at local, regional, national and international level for the promotion and protection the role of indigenous knowledge system of women's in the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, traditional knowledge associate with genetic resources concerned.

- Effective mechanisms is needed at different levels for the creation of working methodology to inspire and enhance the capacity of women to effectively monitor and evaluate programs dealing with biodiversity conservation and intellectual property rights to ensure full accountability for gender sensitive planning, policy making and implementation and impact.
- Indigenous women must be involved in developing programs and strategies for the protection and preservation of their knowledge and conservation of biodiversity, and they should involve themselves or through their traditional institutions or enhancing and organizing them in other development agencies.
- Respect and promote the rights of women in line of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources.

Thank you.