

---

**Bureau Meeting with Major Groups 8am-10am Mon 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

**Statement by Indigenous Peoples**

**Read by Ms Imogen Ingram, Island Sustainability Alliance CIS Inc., COOK ISLANDS**

---

Co-chairs, members of the Bureau, distinguished delegates, fellow major group representatives
---

On behalf of indigenous peoples,

First,

We acknowledge Paragraph 17 on the meaningful involvement and active participation of all Major Groups. Furthermore, we welcome the agreement on Paragraph 21 about the importance of indigenous peoples' participation in achieving sustainable development, and recognizing the importance of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We see this paragraph as a positive step towards more fully integrating human rights and sustainable development in the Rio Outcomes.

Second,

Indigenous peoples' abiding survival is supported by our cultures, providing us with social, material, and spiritual strength. We are able to sustain sound management of ecosystems and sustainable use of biodiversity when traditional knowledge and governance systems are enhanced and restored. Similarly, we believe that all societies must foster cultures of sustainability, and that Rio +20 should highlight the cultural, moral and ethical dimensions, as fundamental, in the transition to sustainable development.

The ethos to respect nature and to take only what is necessary for subsistence and good living, finds expression in indigenous conceptions of sustainable development - such as "sumakkawsay", and "buenvivir".

The Rio political declaration must strongly support diverse local economies as cornerstones of plural "green" economies. To focus on a single green economy, reinforces the tendency to impose top-down, "one size fits all" development, rather than to foster economic diversity which enhances local livelihoods and occupations, alleviates poverty, and operates using participatory decision-making and governance systems.

To address the current problems, we call for a multi-disciplinary knowledge platform, not limited to science but valuing diverse knowledge systems.

CST 97 describes mining as a way for sustainable economic development and poverty alleviation. But we need to recognize that mining has resulted in contamination of water, soil and air and has led to adverse health impacts, and the dislocation of whole communities. For many indigenous peoples, clean-up of contamination from past mining activities is needed to restore their lands, territories and waters.

In countries with a mining sector, we call for implementation of comprehensive legal and regulatory frameworks and policies which would significantly reduce the social and environmental impacts of large-scale commercial mining and unconventional gas activities and the establishment of mining moratoria or “no-go zones” to protect critical biodiversity and food production areas, including in small islands, watersheds and indigenous lands.

CST pre70 on energy including large dams is of concern to indigenous peoples, in many parts of the world.

Any promotion of renewable energy (such as hydropower projects) and mining-related initiatives within lands, territories and waters of indigenous peoples should consistently uphold the right of free prior and informed consent, among others.

In summary, we reiterate the need for consistent application of Para 17 and Para 21, especially where new activities are proposed with regard to mining, energy, water, forestry and biodiversity. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples serves as the minimum international framework to be implemented in relation to the lands, territories and waters of Indigenous Peoples, together with other relevant international agreements and commitments,

Thank you.