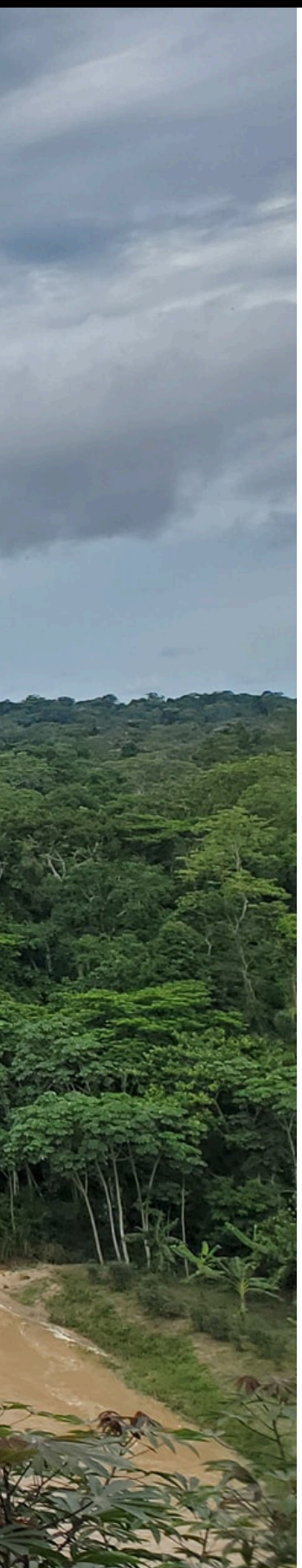
INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL



CONSOLIDATED QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RIGHTS-BASED PRINCIPLES FOR THE ETHICAL ENGAGEMENT OF "CONSERVATION FUNDERS" AND INTERMEDIARIES

2024 AUGUST

Introduction

Indigenous Peoples around the world continue to suffer a wide range of human rights violations as a direct result of projects carried out in the name of "Conservation" in their traditional lands and territories. Very often the projects are initiated without their free prior and informed consent. Many impacted Indigenous Peoples report that they were not informed about the sources and purposes of the funding that supports these activities. Based on this critical situation, the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC)* concurs with the urgent need to develop human rights-based principles for "Conservation Funders" and intermediaries for their actions impacting Indigenous Peoples.

To contribute to this effort now in process, led by the United Nations Environmental Programme, UN Human Rights experts and a group of "Conservation Funders", IITC focused on the need to obtain information and recommendations directly from impacted Indigenous Peoples around the world. Towards this end, the IITC circulated a questionnaire focused on highlighting concerns and recommending key elements of rights-based principles for ethical engagement with Indigenous Peoples by "Conservation Funders" and their intermediaries.

The questionnaire was disseminated globally in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Russian beginning on July 20th, 2024 with a deadline for responses by July 30, 2024 in response to the proposed timeline already established by the coordinators of this process. Despite this very tight time frame, IITC received 73 responses from Indigenous Peoples representatives, organizations and leaders from all 7 socio-cultural regions, representing a reported **765** distinct Indigenous Peoples and Nations, and **8.3 million** Indigenous individuals.

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* IITC, founded in 1974, is an organization of Indigenous Peoples from North, Central and South America, the Caribbean, Arctic and Pacific in General Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council.

CONSOLIDATED QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

1. Your name and title:

Data not available without permission from respondent.

2. Indigenous Peoples/Tribal Nations represented:

Responses were received from leaders and representatives of large regional and national Indigenous Peoples organizations and networks representing a total of 765 distinct Peoples. Some of these organizational and network representatives did not share the names of each People/Tribal Nation they represented in their response. Additional responses were submitted by Indigenous individuals representing their own views. Some Nations/Tribes/Peoples were represented by more than one respondent.

A total of 55 Indigenous Peoples/Tribal Nations were reported by name in the responses. These included: Amazigh; Atacameño – Lickanantay; Barabaig/Iraqw; Ahtna; Benet Mosopishyek; Boro; Cayuga Nation Bear Clan; Chepang Community; Cherokee; Cree; Dholuo; Endorois; Fond du lac Denesuline First Nation; Gila River Indian Community; Guarany-Mbyá e Munduruku; Guna; Huarpe; Huitoto; Iu Mien; ITaukei; Khakasses; Kabi Kabi & Goreng Goreng; Kichwa de Sarayaku; Kui; Maasai; Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation; Maya; Naga; Nga Porou; Nga Rangatahi a iwi; Ngaa Rauru Te Atihauaui-a-Paparangi; Onondaga Nation / Haudenosaunee; Oraon/Urao; Pankararu; Pit River Nation; Quillacas Urinsaya; Rokan Hilir Riau; Selkup; Shorians; Tai-Ahom; Taino; Tamang; Tharu; Terena; Tohono O'odham Nation; Tripura; Udege; Uitoto; Waorani; Yanomami; Yaqui; Zapoteco.

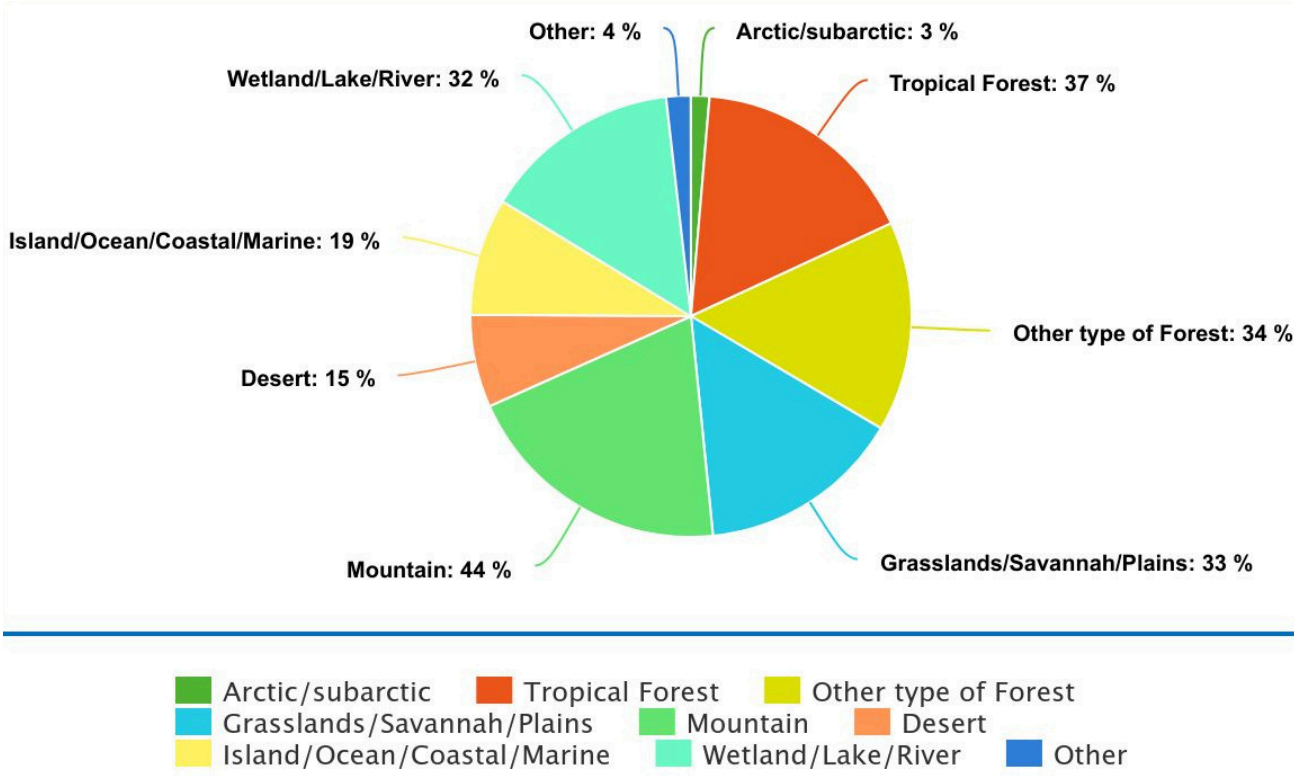
3. Organization name and position (if applicable):

Data available on request

4. Country/Territory

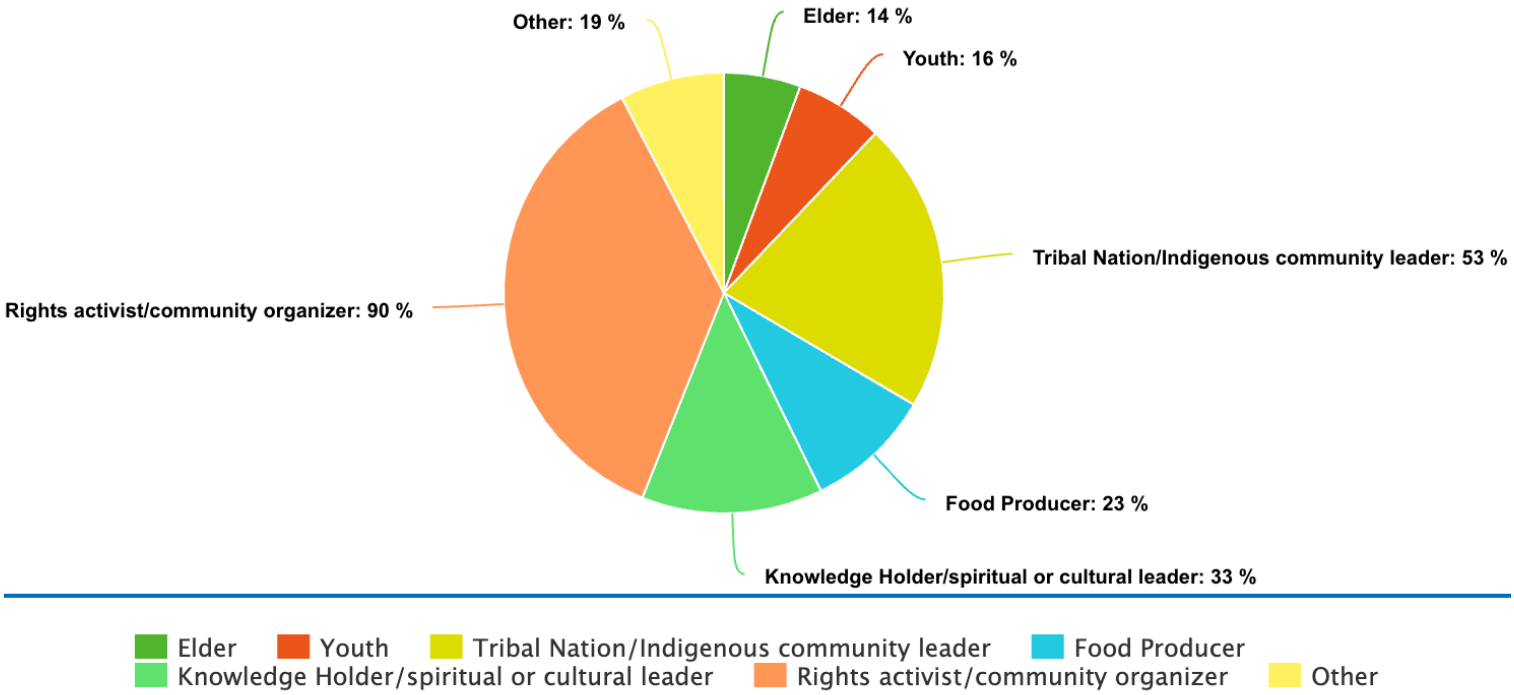
Indigenous Peoples from the following 35 countries were represented in the responses: Aotearoa (New Zealand); Argentina; Bangladesh; Belize; Bolivia; Borikén (Puerto Rico); Brazil; Cambodia; Canada; Chile; Congo, République démocratique du; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; Fiji; French Guyana; Guatemala; Guyana; India; Indonesia; Kenya; Mexico; Morocco; Myanmar; Nepal; Niger; Panama; Peru; Russia; South Africa; Suriname;Tanzania; Thailand; United States (including Alaska); Uganda; Venezuela

5. What eco-system best describes your Indigenous territory? (Check all that apply):



Other: Pantanal; Caatinga; Balle Altiplanico; High Andean Salt Flats; Agricultural Area; Low deciduous forest

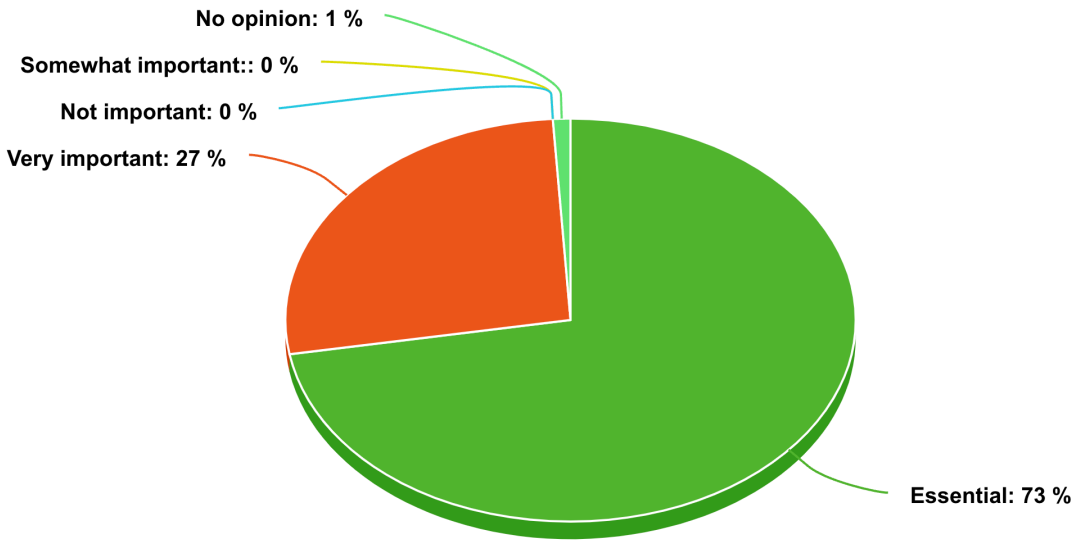
6. What term/s best describe you? (Check all that apply)



7. How many individuals' inputs are represented in your responses?
Respondents reported that they represented a total of **765** distinct Indigenous Peoples, Tribes, Nations and Indigenous communities, and over **8.3 million** Indigenous individuals, in their responses.

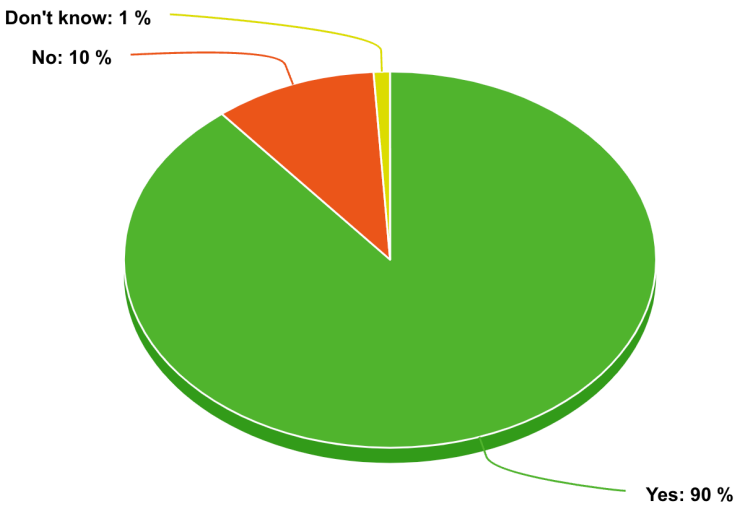
Questions 8 & 9 requested date, location, phone number or email.

10. How important is the protection, restoration, and preservation of the natural biodiversity in your lands and territories for the continuation of the way of life, culture, Food and Knowledge Systems of your Peoples/Tribal Nation?

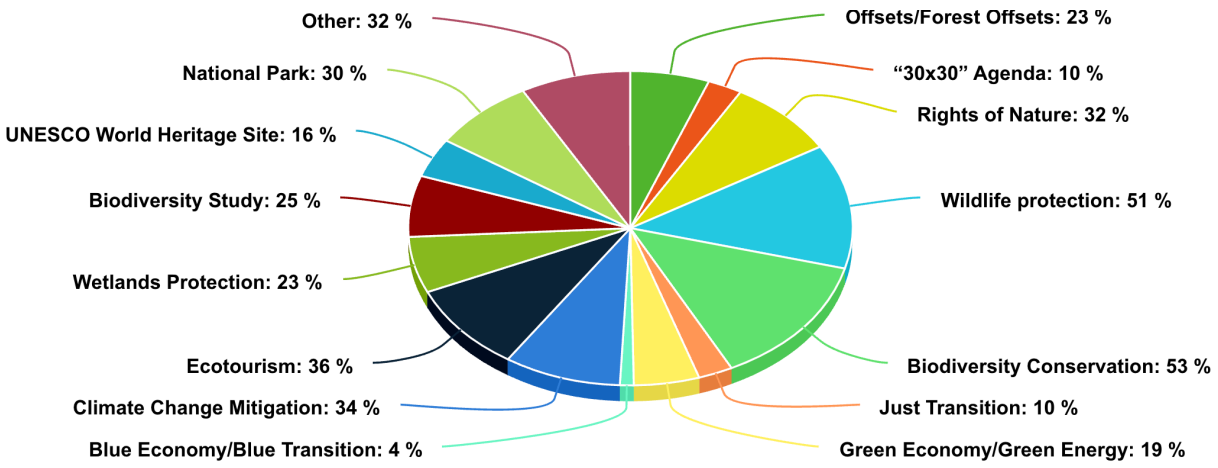


Note: 99% of respondents stated essential or very important.

11. Have your People/Tribal Nation been involved with or impacted by programs or projects brought into your territories from outside actors, which were presented as measures to Conserve/Protect Biological Diversity (animals, plants, fish, or other species), Protect the Environment/ Ecosystem, Mitigate Climate Change?



12. If your people were involved or impacted, were these projects described in any of the following ways? (Check all that apply):

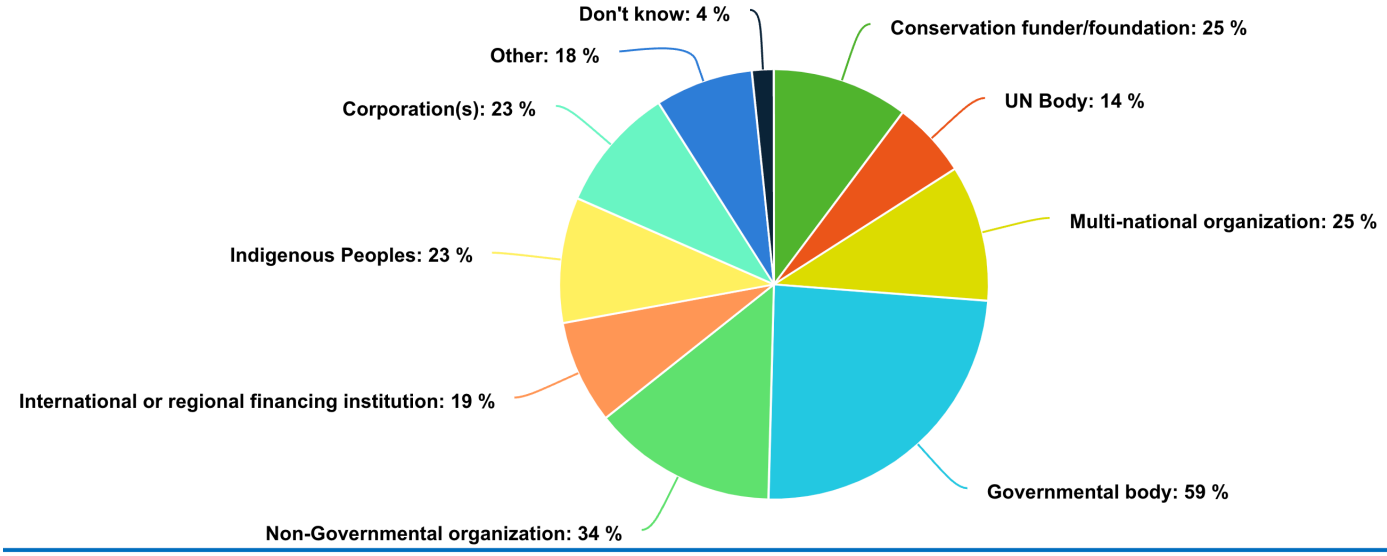


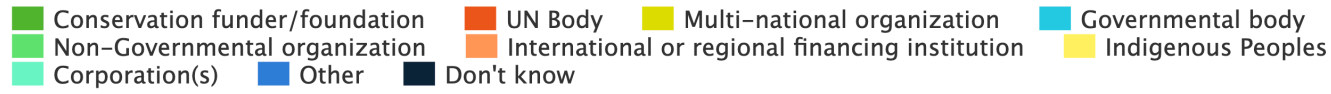
Other: National monument; Flood control; Impact Assessment; Provincial Parks; Conservancies; dams on sacred rivers; Sanctuary; Deer Park; Social Forestry; Bird Area Conservation; Reserve Forest; Protection of the Pantanal Biome; Restoration of the spring behind ITAIPU; National forest and PAE; Moscamed Program

13. Please briefly describe the actual project(s) or program(s):

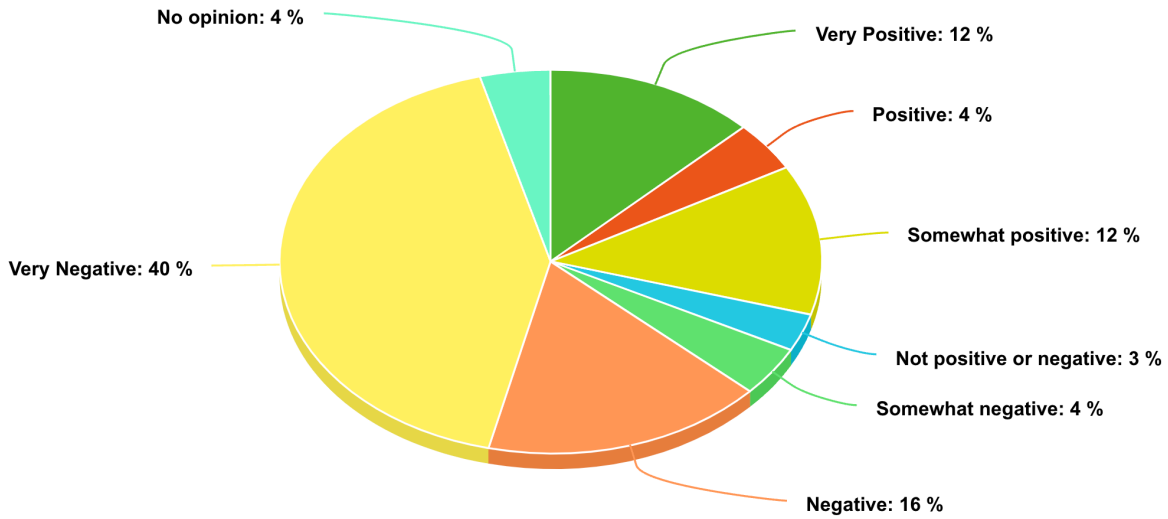
Data available on request

14. Do you know what entity/ies carried out this project/s or program/s? (Check all that apply)



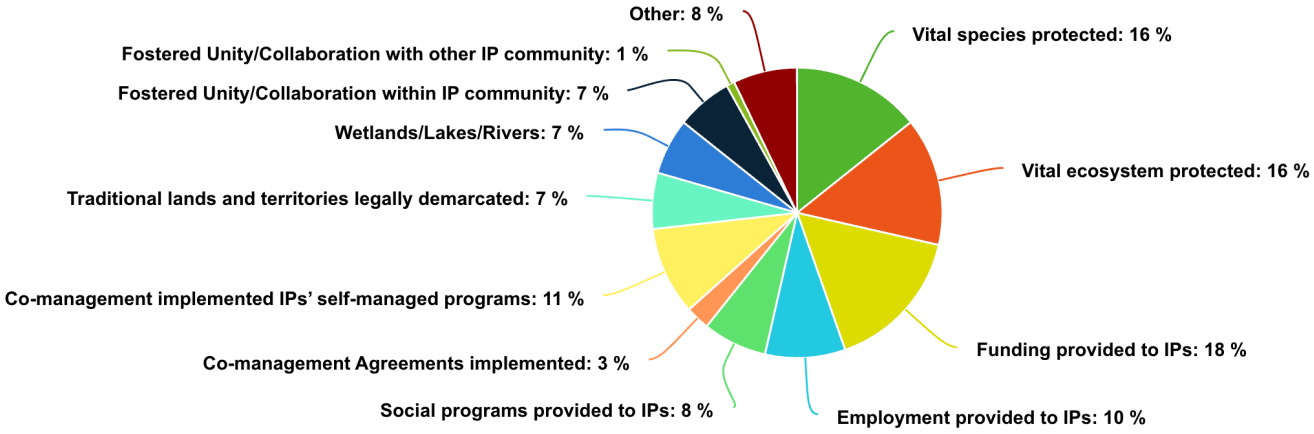


15. How would you describe overall the impact/s of these activities or programs on your Peoples/Tribal Nations' rights, territories, and ways of life?



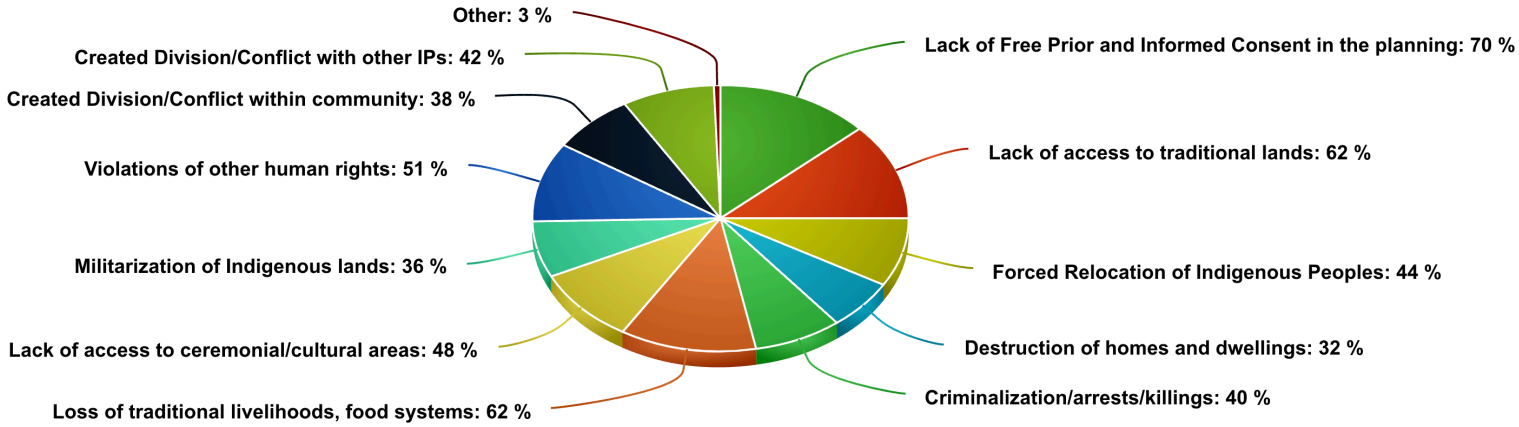
Note: 16% of respondents chose Positive/Very Positive while 56% chose Negative/Very Negative.

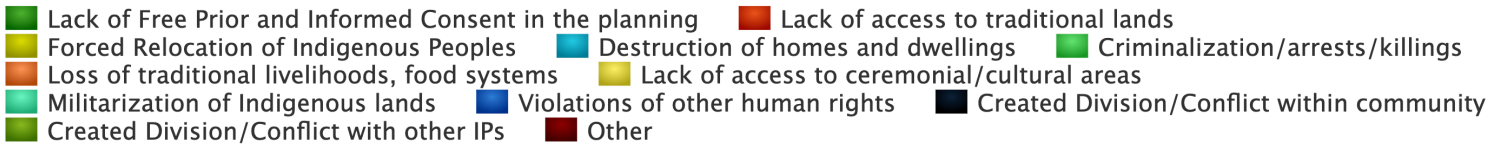
16. If you described the impacts as Very Positive, Positive or Somewhat Positive, please provide examples of the benefits (Check all that apply):



Other: "There have been small, one-off payments, which are nothing close to remedying damage done"; Environmental Unit of the Atacameño People's Council - self-financing

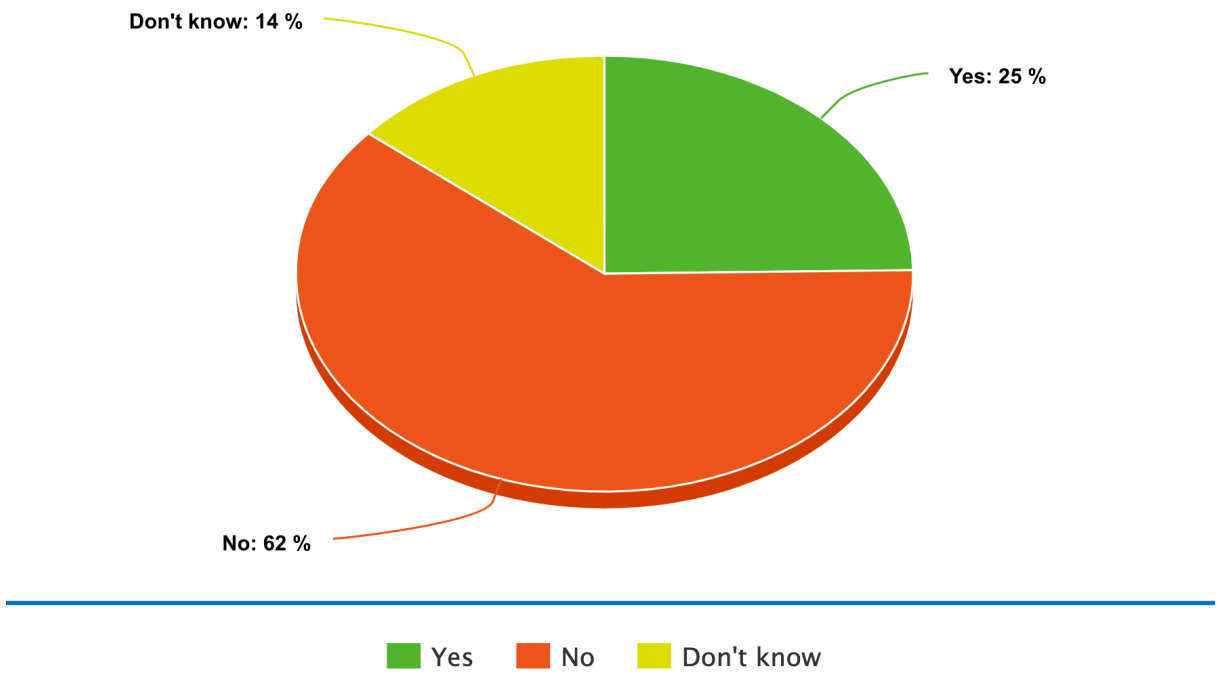
17. If you described the impacts as Very Negative, Negative or Somewhat Negative, provide examples of the negative impacts: (Check all that apply):





Other: Increase in poverty; "There was no consultation, and it went against the will of the communities"

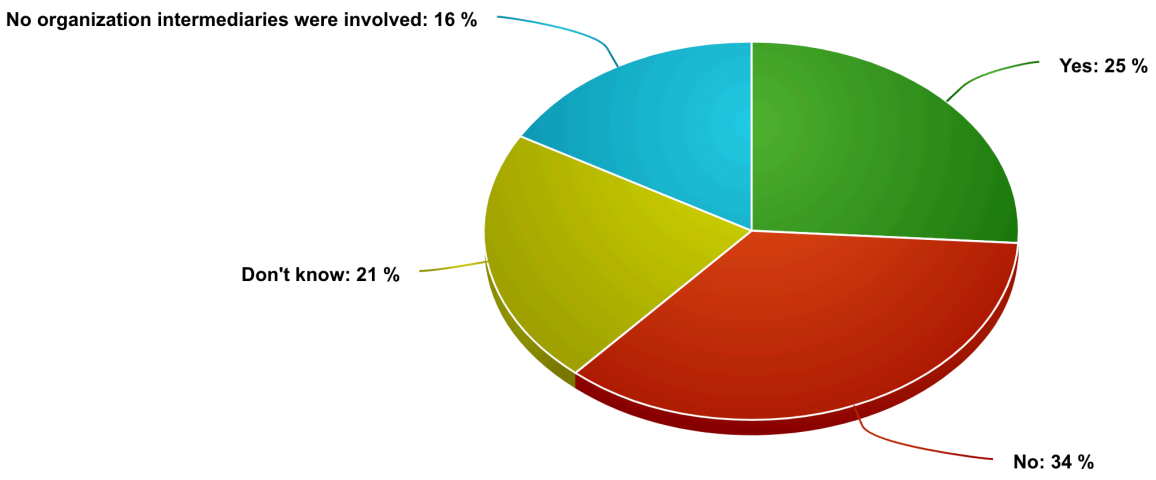
18. Whether your experience was positive or negative, were you informed of the sources of funding for the projects or activities brought into your lands or territories?



19. If you feel comfortable in doing so, please list these funders:

Calpine Energy Corporation; United States Government; Arramat Project; UNDP; Luxembourg-Fiji Drua Innovation Small Grants Scheme; UNDP-SGP; IUCN; USAID; World Bank; UNESCO; Conservation International; Japan International Cooperative Assistance (JICA); International Gorilla Conservation Programme; Ministry of Indigenous Peoples, Brazil; ITAIPU in partnership with the Department of the Environment (Brazil); World Bank via DGM- PCDF project; Rainforest Foundation Norway; RRI through Fonds Bezons; Rainforest Fund; Colombian Ministry of Environment and Development, vision amazonia program; National Parks; charcoal hunters or private companies; NGOs; UNDP; National Ministry of Environment; Municipality of Sarmiento; WWF; Russian Government; Malaysian Government

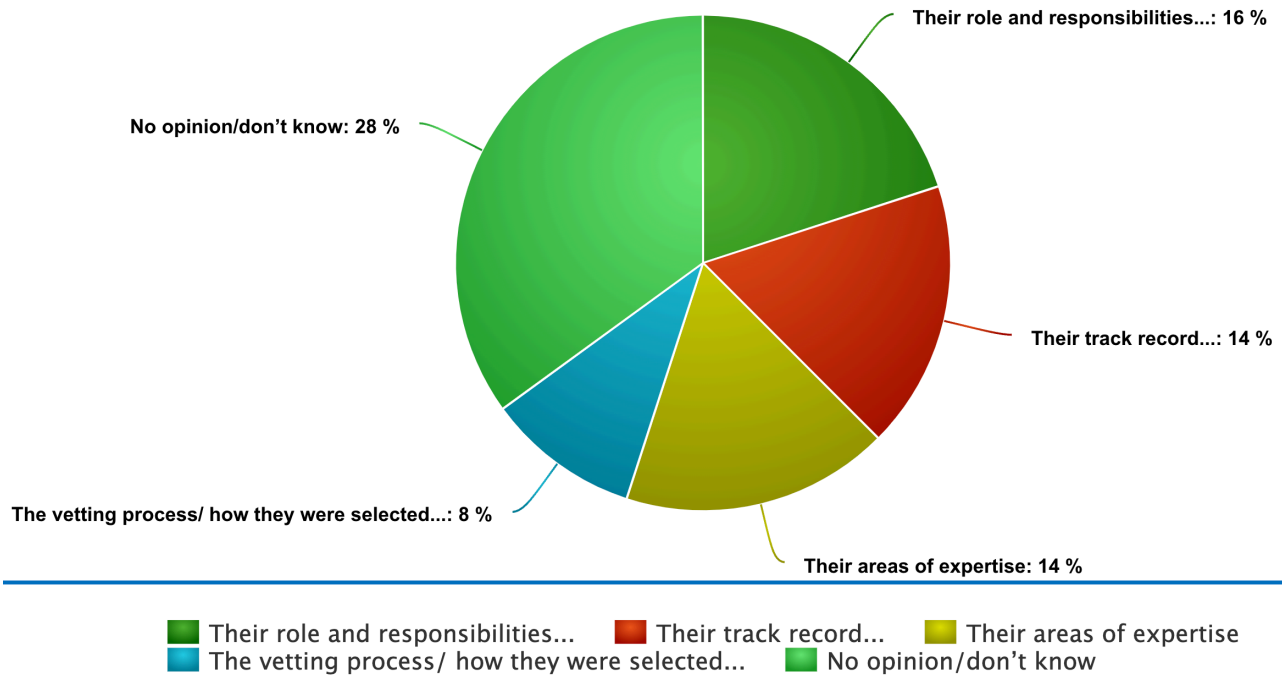
20. If intermediaries (organizations, NGOs, or other entities) were involved in carrying out this project, were you informed of their names?



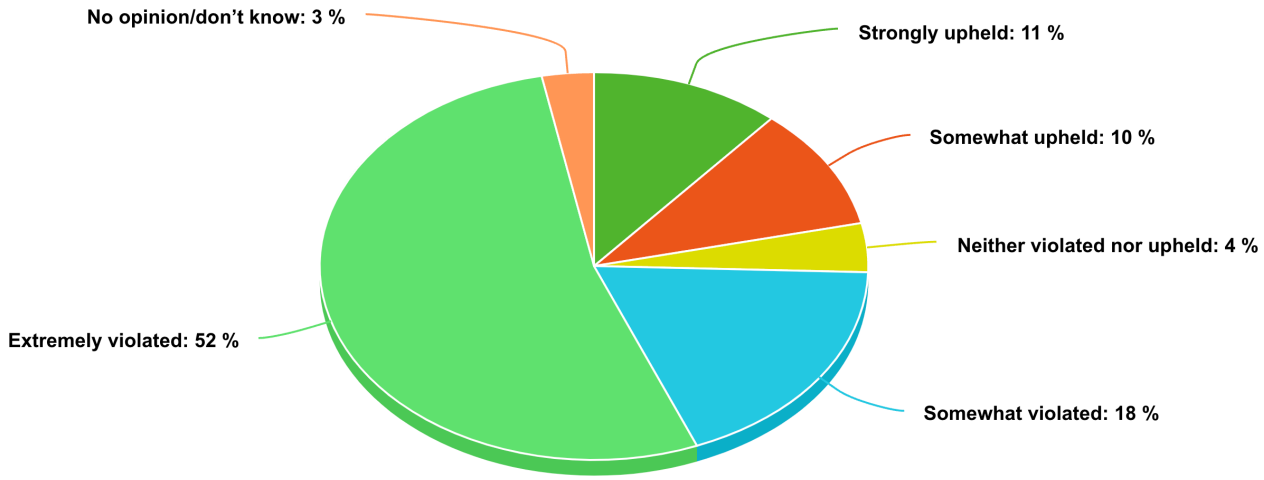
21. If you feel comfortable in doing so, please list the names of these intermediaries:

Fluminense Federal University – UFF; Ministry of Environment; IBC; Zoological Society of Frankfurt; SERNANP; DCA,FIMI, Pawanka, FIMI, NPA, Diakonia, Oxfam; CELDF, GARN;

22. If you know these intermediaries involved, were you informed of (check all that apply):

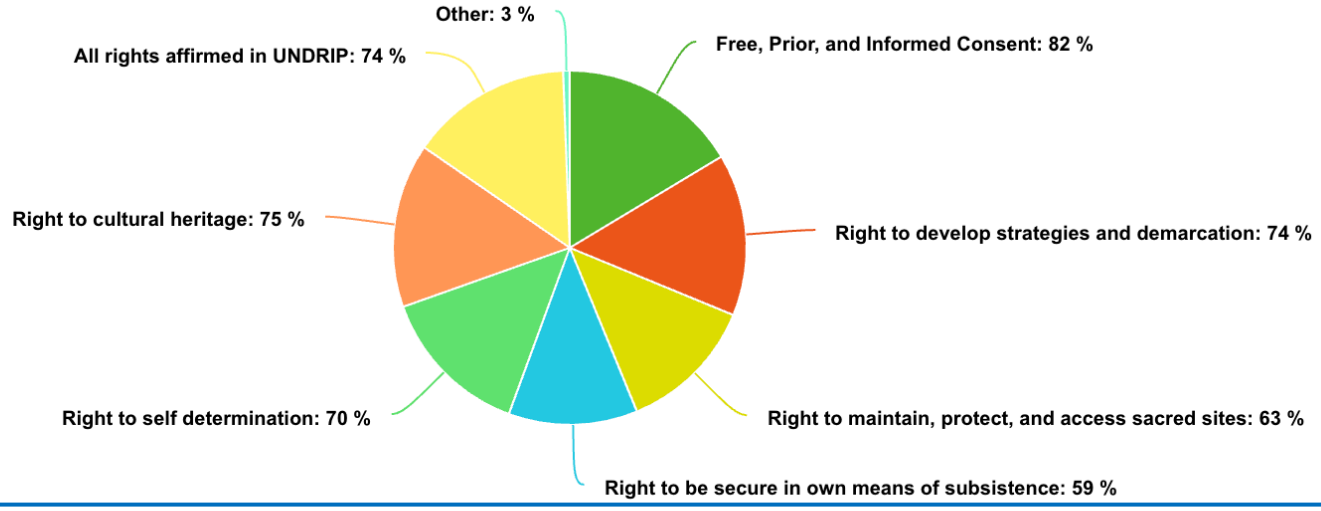


23. Overall, do you feel that the rights of your Peoples were violated or upheld in the planning and implementation of this project/s or program/s?



Strongly upheld
Somewhat upheld
Neither violated nor upheld
Somewhat violated
Extremely violated
No opinion/don't know

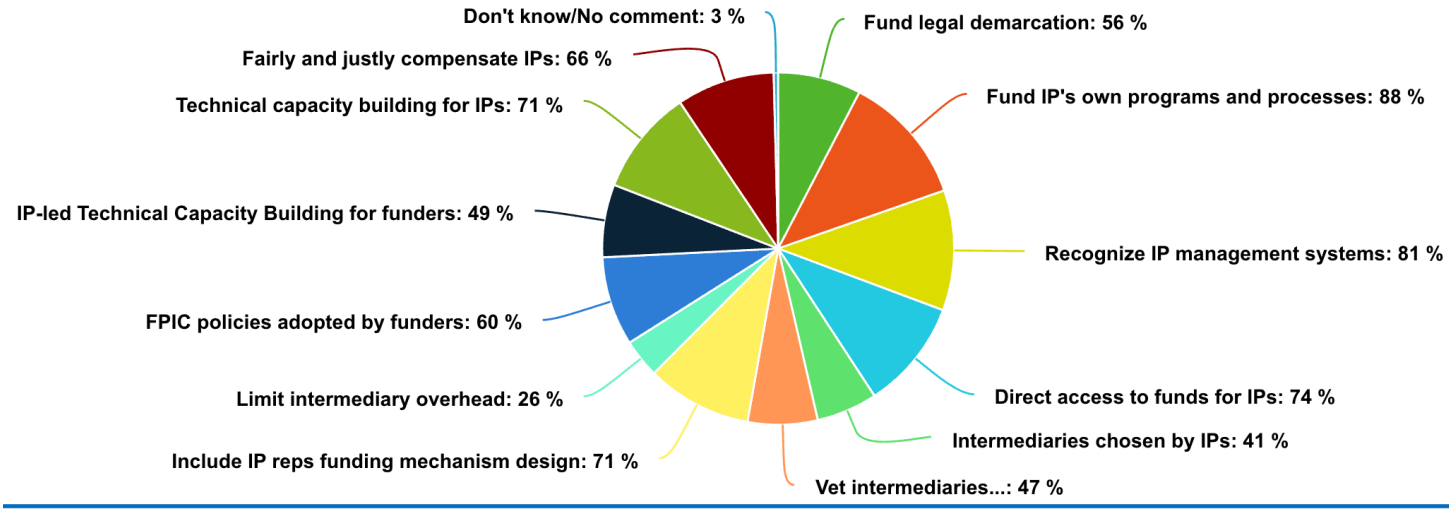
24. Going forward, what are the most essential rights that you want States, Funders, UN Bodies and Intermediaries to commit to and support before they engage in funding, planning or implementing Conservation or Climate mitigation projects in your Peoples' lands and territories (Check all that apply):



Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
Right to develop strategies and demarcation
Right to maintain, protect, and access sacred sites
Right to be secure in own means of subsistence
Right to self determination
Right to cultural heritage
All rights affirmed in UNDRIP
Other

Other: Water rights

25. What are some ways funding can be improved to support Indigenous-led conservation?



26. Any additional comments about how conservation funders can improve their funding practices?

“Fund projects that build capacity and capabilities of Indigenous communities mostly impacted or connected to these lands. Resource them, enhance their connections to land/environment. Support them to care for the environment.”

“Funding specifically dedicated; Funding for reciprocal / restorative projects to give back to the environment in any developments; Funding for tribal / family meetings to enable collective discussion & decision making in keeping with traditional practices - Relinquish power!”

“Trust the knowledge derived from the land; Look into the social dimension of their leaving standards and enabled Construction Funding for Indigenous Communities for their resource/technical centres by financing them using their own natural resources as well.”

Identify and stop imposing and promoting Euro-Western ideologies and approaches / solutions that are inconsistent with and replace them with Indigenous spirituality, traditions, and worldviews; indigenous should lead the process; Before funding, need to engage and consult with Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Network on Climate Change and Biodiversity (BIPNet) for appropriate involvement of Indigenous peoples in Bangladesh.”

“Respecting laws. Respecting the Peoples. Recognizing and regularizing Indigenous territories.”

“Donors act through local Indigenous organizations that understand the priority needs of Indigenous Peoples; fund Indigenous Peoples directly and not the intermediaries.”

“The damage is ecosystemic or ecological and the damage is sociocultural, when companies arrive to Indigenous lands, both damages are produced and economic support should be considered for both and prepare the people so that they are not corrupted with money. Funds should be well used where appropriate with analysis and diagnostics that support actions.”

“Funders should finance Indigenous Peoples directly without intermediaries. NGOs never reach the territory, if funding arrives, the surplus does not suffice to implement initiatives.”

“Strengthening of Indigenous Peoples' self-governments and financing of their life plans.”

“Respecting the right to self-determination and consultation in all project processes, since some projects and actions were carried out without the participation of those who live in the community territory.”

“Access to financing systems must be democratized, Indigenous Peoples must build their own economic model in the exercise of their right to self-determination, an economic model based on the contribution that Indigenous Peoples, with or without recognition, continue to care for, protect, and develop initiatives that are resilient to climate change.”

“Respecting self-determination and the creation of Autonomous Territorial Governments That they have no conflict of interest, that a monitoring plan is developed, that the sources of their financing are known, and that they strengthen the capacities of the communities and Indigenous Peoples.”

“Adapting and solving basic problems and promoting heritage.” “Trust and partnership.”

“I am not aware of any cases of interaction between environmental funding organizations and Indigenous Peoples in our republic. Due to the fact that the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is not applied in practice in Russia, our rights are not mentioned here. The creation and activities of specially protected natural areas are carried out without taking into account the opinion of the Indigenous Peoples and without their participation. Initially, it is necessary to work out the processes of interaction between the State and Indigenous Peoples. Changes in the state policy towards Indigenous Peoples are necessary.”

Acknowledgements

The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) thanks the many Indigenous Peoples organizations, networks, and allies that assisted us in the rapid dissemination of this questionnaire. These include: Center for Indigenous Peoples’ Research and Development (CIPRED); Africa Indigenous Livelihood Enhancement Partners (ILEPA); Conservation Initiative, Jamii Asilia Centre; First Peoples Worldwide (FPW); Indigenous Peoples Major Group on the SDGs, Center for support of Indigenous Peoples of the North (CSIPN); Batani Foundation; Indigenous Peoples' Center for Documentation, Research and Information (DOCIP); Project Access Indigenous Partnership; North American Indigenous Peoples Working Group on Climate Change; International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIFB); University of Arizona, Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program (IPLP); Inclusive Conservation Academy (ICA); and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Report preparation

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