

# INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' FORUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE CLOSING STATEMENT

Ko Aoraki te mauka  
Ko Waitaki te awa  
Ko Tahu Potiki te tupuna  
Ko Uenuku, Ko Tahu Potiki ka whare  
Ko Kati Rakiamoa ko Kati Waewae ko Kati Ruahikihiki ka karakataka

E mihi ana ki a koutou

My name is Kera Sherwood-O'Regan, and I am a proudly disabled Kai Tahu woman from Aotearoa, New Zealand.

When I introduce myself I connect to my family, my ancestors, my river, and our chiefly ancestral mountain Aoraki who stands amongst his brothers as the tallest peak in the Southern Alps. He is **currently melting due to your inaction**.

As Indigenous Peoples, we come here every year, often on our own dime to advocate for our peoples and our lands because **it is what must be done**.

We are constantly forced to fight for our rights to be included.

While we acknowledge the importance of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform Workplan being adopted at this session, we can't help but feel the irony of your refusal to include human rights and Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Article 6 [1 min], when we know that market approaches have already **directly harmed** our communities.

**Our knowledge cannot be upheld if our rights are not upheld.**

You treat negotiations like a zero sum game, where you make deals behind closed doors, trading off our rights for the profits of those who caused this very problem in the first place.

**But you forget that we cannot negotiate with nature!**

Since the colonial project began, we have been overcoming an apocalypse on our lands. This has embedded patriarchy, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, white supremacy, and systemic oppressions within both national and international mechanisms.

Yet you continue to sideline those who have real solutions for **all** communities.

**When you silence us, you deny yourselves learning from our ways.**

**We are experts** on the climate, and the kaitiaki- stewards of nature.

**We know** the legitimacy of our voice and it's about time that you recognize it too. [2 min]

Hear our stories, learn our histories, stop taking up space with your false solutions and get out of our way. Because we are here with real solutions and we are united with all people, People with Disabilities and other structurally oppressed communities in our vision for transformative change.

**People Power is Climate Justice! [2.19]**

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