

# DECLARATION OF THE INDIGENOUS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCY GATHERING

**“nihimá nahasdzáán nihee iiná dóó nihi sihasin at'é”  
SHIPROCK, SW DINÉ NATION – 13 AUGUST 2016**

from the east we are blessed with the dawn  
we are given the divine gift of *nitsáhákees*-thinking  
we are made to be holy surface peoples of the Earth  
our souls are one with the souls of living beings of all time  
we were placed here with the four sacred plants to guide us  
our original instructions teach us that corn is a root of our lifeways  
our songs and prayers resonant with the heartbeat of our Earth Mother

with the south we are given the teachings to make our life plan  
we are given reasoning to set our path of life with *nahat'á*-planning  
in our early times we were happy living the Original Intent of the Creator  
with the great intrusion of the invader our world became a life of hardship  
our original instructions gave us resilience to make our way through difficult times  
we are told we don't own the land, but we belong to the Earth and she belongs to us  
no earthly power or law has the authority to deny us our relationship with our Earth Mother

by the west we journey with the sacredness of living  
we have been given the precious opportunity for *iiná*-living  
we have profound and troubling concern for the state of the world  
where powers of government and business compete to destroy the Earth  
where we continue to suffer the consequences of the Doctrine of Discovery  
where our life struggle is to rise above the conditions of colonization and dependency  
where we must decolonize our policies and practices of food, water and land to live to survive

from the north we seek wisdom through our reflections  
in humbleness we pray for blessings of unyielding *sihasin*-hope  
our struggle to live is one of resistance, resilience and determination  
in our wisdom we know we have the roots, songs and courage to survive  
our strength and power is in our Indigenous identity, history, culture and politic  
in healing from our intergenerational, historic unresolved trauma we also heal the Earth  
we accept our life responsibility to remain Warriors uncompromising, to defend the sacred

we touch our sweet Earth Mother as we honor her life  
we thank her for her life and beg her to have courage for our life  
we feel and live her pain, we stand against unrelenting exploitation of her  
we demand our Tribal Nations that our home lands be GMO and pesticides free  
we stand strong to fight climate change and rally the cry of “Leave it in the Ground”  
as Defenders of the Earth we stand together for Indigenous unity to defend our ground  
it is of utmost urgency to protect the life of the Earth Mother as it is the future of the children

we pray the heavens to bless us with impeccable principles  
as we walk strong to live our chosen lifeways the Creator set for us  
as children of the Great Creator and the Earth Mother we demand justice  
for our human rights to life, food, water, culture, health and clean environment  
we challenge our Tribal leaders to protect our sacred medicines and our natural foods  
it is an absolute that to be sovereign and self-determined, we must have food sovereignty  
we call out our Tribal leaders and Warriors to defend our Indigenous lifeways, our Earth, our life

## **DECLARATION OF THE INDIGENOUS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCY GATHERING**

the Shiprock Chapter and International Indian Treaty Council were honored to host the Gathering to provide this opportunity where relatives from the SW Diné Nation and other Indigenous Nations could come together to share our traditional food knowledge and our leadership thoughts about how we can work to restore and protect our traditional knowledge and lifeways to preserve our seeds, foods and to defend our lands and waters that sustain all life to grow our grandchildren to be strong in the future to face myriad challenges our life work is to assure their wellness in spirit, culture and physical health we commit to one another to continue learning and sharing in these ways we commit to pass this knowledge on to our children for their survival as our prophecies teach that future times will not be kind to all life

we were blessed with our traditional ways of planting, gathering, and caring for our animals blessings which were passed to us through our songs, stories, prayers and ceremonies these lifeways contain answers that are to help the world address climate change to restore healthy foods and help institute green sustainable energy production we fight land theft, deforestation and other threats to our food sovereignty we are committed to protect and defend our remaining Indigenous lands to educate and preserve our lands for Indigenous Food Sovereignty our lands must be free from genetically modified seeds and plants and all forms of chemical contamination and toxic pesticides so that our natural world is protected, nurtured and shared

we proclaim our Indigenous human rights and our right to self-determination as sovereign free Peoples we affirm our inherent rights recognized in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples we honor the life sacrifices of our ancestors as we carry on the sacred responsibilities to our Peoples, our future generations and to our sweet sacred Earth Mother, we thank the land, water, our relations with the plant and animal worlds who give their beings and souls to give us all we need for our lives we affirm our commitment to the Creator and to one another to protect our Earth Mother, so that life can continue it is urgent that we rise and sing the drum the life of our Earth Mother is our life

**adopted on 13 August 2016  
Shiprock, SW Diné Nation**

*“Indigenous peoples have the right  
to maintain and strengthen their distinctive  
spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or  
otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and  
other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.”  
--- Article 25, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

**Further Endorsed and Adopted by Consensus of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary IITC Conference  
September 11<sup>th</sup> 2016, Waimanalo, Hawaii**