
North American Indigenous Peoples Climate Change Consultations

Report on the Road to Paris Initiative

International Indian Treaty Council
March 31, 2016



Published by International Indian Treaty Council
2940 16th Street, Suite 305,
San Francisco, CA 94103
www.iitc.org

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Carmen, Andrea and Borrero, Roberto. *North American Indigenous Peoples Climate Change Consultations: Report On the Road to Paris Initiative*, International Indian Treaty Council, San Francisco, CA, March 31, 2016

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Layout & Design

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Cover Photo Collage

1. (Top left) Salmon with Lesions: Rising water temperatures are causing various salmon diseases. *Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lower Columbia Fish Health Center.*
2. (Top right) Trading and sharing traditional Indigenous seed varieties strengthen resilience and capacity for Indigenous farming peoples to adapt to changing climate conditions, *Photo courtesy of IITC.*
3. (Bottom left) Tribal Nations are working to restore the Buffalo, which are resistant to a range of climate conditions and contribute to the resiliency of Native grasslands, mitigating climate change impacts. *Photo courtesy of the Intertribal Buffalo Council, South Dakota*
4. (Bottom right) Climate change-related forest fires have increased dramatically in Western Canada and the US, *Photo of an Indigenous Fire Crew preparing to fight the Elaho Fire in June 2015, burning*

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**North American Indigenous Peoples Climate Change Consultations:
“On the Road to Paris” Initiative Report
Submitted by the International Indian Treaty Council
March 30, 2016**

“Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.”

--- Article 29, paragraph 1, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



Grand Chief Tony Alexis, Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations, Canada, addresses Indigenous Leaders at the IITC - NCAI Climate Change Consultation in San Diego, California October 17, 2015

“We call upon our Tribal governments, the United States, other countries and the United Nations to implement effective solutions and responses to climate change through strong actions that respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, protect our food sovereignty and reduce greenhouse gasses by moving away from fossil fuel extraction, production and use towards a just transition to sustainable practices and forms of development. We also commit ourselves to protect, use and apply our traditional knowledge and practices, our seeds, medicines and animals, our ceremonies and the teachings of our spiritual leaders and knowledge holders, to implement solutions and ways to adapt to climate change within our own Nations and communities in keeping with our sacred responsibilities for the survival of our Peoples, ways of life and future generations.” –

--- Southwest Tribal Nations Food Sovereignty Conference and Climate Change Consultation Declaration, Shiprock, New Mexico, Diné Nation, Diné Bikéyah, August 9, 2015

I. Introduction

From July through October 2015, the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), partnered with several Tribal Nations and Indigenous Organizations to organize and facilitate seven Climate Change consultations with Indigenous Peoples in the United States and Canada. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in conjunction with the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC), supported the consultations as part of the “Road to Paris Initiative”, which was carried out in coordination with Indigenous Peoples from the seven geographical regions. The Initiative was carried out specifically to build the participation and seek the input of Indigenous Peoples in preparation for the 21st Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP21), which took place in Paris, France from November 30 – December 12, 2015.

UNDP provided the main funding support for this initiative with the objectives of: **1)** Affirming climate change as a priority issue among Indigenous Peoples; **2)** Strengthening and supporting engagement of Indigenous Peoples in the UNFCCC processes leading up to and during COP21 and the achievement of a legally-binding global agreement to reduce, mitigate and adapt to climate change; **3)** Gathering regional input toward the proposed establishment of a Global Indigenous Peoples Climate Fund and **4)** Gathering input from all regions, including North America, for a proposed COP21 “Indigenous Peoples Pavilion” (an exhibit /presentation space) within the conference campus in Paris.

An additional focus was to gather information and engage Indigenous Peoples from various ecosystems, food systems and capacities (youth, elders, Tribal Nation leaders, traditional knowledge holders, food producers, etc.) in discussions about local impacts of Climate Change. A key subject theme during the discussions was the importance and role of traditional knowledge and practices, as well as a rights-based approach, in Climate Change prevention, mitigation and adaptation by indigenous Tribal Nations and communities.

The IITC functioned as the North American Regional Focal Point organization for this initiative leading up to and during COP21. Coordination was provided by IIPFCC Global Steering Committee members from North America **Andrea Carmen**, Yaqui Nation and IITC Executive Director, and **Chief Bill Erasmus**, Dene Nation Chief and Assembly of First Nations, as well as **Roberto Múkaro Borrero**, Borikén Taino Nation, as regional and communications focal point representing IITC. **Kim Gottschalk** of the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) was the member from North America on the technical team for the Global Steering Committee (GSC).

II. Background

The goal of the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was to finalize a legally binding international agreement to reduce greenhouse gasses, curb the pace of climate change and define programs to help the most vulnerable States and Peoples, including Indigenous Peoples, to mitigate and adapt to its impacts. The North American Indigenous Peoples Climate Change Consultations gathered input toward this process from members and representatives of Indigenous Peoples, Tribal Nations and organizations throughout the U.S. and Canada. To assist in facilitating the collection of input from North America and other regions, IITC also developed a climate change questionnaire focusing on key issues, impacts and solutions for mitigation and adaptation including the role of traditional knowledge and practices. The questionnaire was distributed at all the North American consultations organized by IITC and online in English and Spanish via various web sites and list serves. It was also made available for use by other regions via UNDP and the IIPFCC GSC representing all seven regions of the world.

III. North American Indigenous Peoples Climate Change Consultations

“Restoring the Buffalo to their original homelands in North America is also essential to restoring our cultures, Treaty rights, health and our independent way of life as Buffalo Nations. Through these consultations we’ve also come to see that bringing back the Buffalo will help protect us from the effects of climate change. Buffalo are helping to bring back the native grasses that hold moisture in the soil and prevent erosion in times of drought. They can withstand the extreme weather we are seeing more frequently. Last year we heard that 100,000 cattle died in an early blizzard in South Dakota. But not a single buffalo died in that storm. Buffalo have a natural ability to survive climate change, and they’ll help us to survive it too.”

--- Ervin Carlson, Blackfeet Nation Montana,
President, Inter-Tribal Buffalo Council
made up of 60 Tribal Nations, Oneida Nation Consultation on
Climate Change, Green Bay Wisconsin, October 26, 2015

Seven Consultations, two held in Canada and five in the United States, brought together over 350 North American Tribal Nation leaders and members, including youth, elders, traditional food producers, human rights and environmental activists, Indigenous scientists, spiritual leaders and traditional knowledge holders to discuss: **1)** the causes and impacts of Climate Change on their Nations/Tribes and communities; **2)** policy positions to take to COP21 building on previous Indigenous Peoples’ global positions as well as the direct experiences and observations shared during the Consultations; **3)** regional/thematic contributions and perspectives for presentations and displays at the proposed Indigenous Peoples Pavilion at COP21; **3)** recommendations for other events and activities during COP21; **4)** needs, priorities and proposals for structuring a proposed Indigenous Peoples Global Fund to support community and Tribal initiatives to address Climate Change in North America and other regions; and **5)** Examples of Indigenous Peoples’ current or proposed initiatives to address Climate Change in their own Nations and communities, using traditional knowledge, food sources and methods, as well as new appropriate technologies.

In order to maximize participation and outreach, several of these consultations were held in conjunction with other key events and gatherings of Indigenous Peoples already scheduled, as noted below.

A. Montreal, Canada, July 6, 2015

The first consultation was coordinated jointly by IITC and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and preceded their thirty-sixth Annual General Assembly in Montreal, Canada on July 6th, 2015. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national advocacy organization representing First Nations in Canada, with more than 900,000 members living in 634 First Nation reserves and in cities and towns across the country. First Nation leaders (Chiefs) from coast to coast direct the work of AFN through resolutions passed at the Assembly of Chiefs held at least twice a year.

AFN co-sponsored the consultation, assisted in identifying the local venue, accommodations and other on the ground logistics, as well as the outreach to national Tribal Leadership to raise the visibility of and urge participation in the consultation. An announcement of the event was placed on the AFN website and also sent to their communications e-lists. In addition, several Indigenous leaders from the U.S. were invited to attend the consultation to provide input into the discussion and build regional solidarity and information sharing. Approximately thirty-five participants attended, mainly First Nations chiefs and leaders from throughout Canada. Twenty questionnaires were completed by the First Nations leaders present at the Consultation, representing the reported voices of approximately 125,150 First Nation citizens.

Examples of Climate Change impacts in Canada were shared and discussed. One extreme example was shared by participants from British Columbia, who stated that there were over 300 forest fires burning as of the previous week, threatening communities, subsistence foods and natural habitats used by many First Nations.



United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues member, Grand Chief Edward John of the First Nations Summit in British Columbia addresses the consultation in Montreal, Canada

B. Shiprock, New Mexico, August 8 - 9, 2015

The second consultation was held in Shiprock, on the Navajo Nation in New Mexico in conjunction with the Southwest Tribal Food Sovereignty Conference. The consultation was held on 8 August at Diné College South Campus, Shiprock Chapter, Navajo Nation Territory. The IITC's consultation partners included Diné College and the Shiprock Chapter of the Navajo Nation, Diné Bikeya. Seventy-eight individuals attended from eleven Indigenous Nations. Twenty-one Climate Change questionnaires were completed by participants including Tribal leaders who reported representing approximately 47,077 citizens of Tribal Nations. A key outcome of the consultation was its final Declaration adopted by consensus on August 9, which highlighted Climate Change as well as other inter-related threats to the Southwestern environment and Indigenous Peoples' Food Sovereignty, including a toxic mining waste spill, which reached Shiprock that same weekend.

A key focus of discussion was the role of traditional knowledge and methods such as storing and sharing drought resistant seeds, underground food storage, and water saving methods. The profound inter-generational knowledge of Indigenous spiritual leaders was also presented. A Diné Spiritual Leader (Hataalii) told participants that a group of Hataalii had been discussing the signs they would see when Climate Change began to impact their land for over fifty years, such as certain changes in wild plants and insects. He explained how those things were beginning to happen and invited Dine community members to visit his land with him (up the mountain on foot!) so that they could learn to see those things for themselves.



Some of the participants at the consultation in Shiprock, New Mexico, Navajo Nation, Diné bikeya

C. Burney, California, August 13-14, 2015

The third consultation was held at the Pit River Tribe Multi-Purpose Room, Pit River Nation, in Burney, California, August 13 - 14, 2015. The IITC's consultation partner for this event was the Pit River Tribal Nation. Approximately thirty-six individuals attended, including Pit River Tribal leaders and Council members, as well as eight other Indigenous Nations, mainly from the Pacific coastal and North Western states. Twenty-two Climate Change questionnaires were completed by participants including Tribal leaders representing approximately 9,002 Tribal members.

A key outcome of this consultation was that community members and Tribal leadership supported the development of a resolution on Climate Change for presentation at the upcoming National Conference of the National Congress of American Indians in October. The Pit River Tribal Nation leaders committed to participating in this conference in San Diego and to actively sponsor and advocate for its adoption (this resolution was adopted by NCAI on 23 October 2015, see F, below).

During the consultation in Burney, CA, the severe impacts of Climate Change on Indigenous Peoples' coastal fisheries was presented by traditional fishers as well as Indigenous biologists. A particular focus was on salmon as a primary source of food as well as a foundation of culture, spiritual practices for many indigenous Pacific Coastal Nations. For example, representatives from the Columbia River reported that in 2015, 80% of the returning Coho Salmon had died from diseases caused by warming river water. A wildlife biologist from California also reported that the Central California Coho Salmon run was predicted for extinction by the end of the century due to diminished snow melt as well as salinization and warming of rivers.



Some of the participants at the national consultation held in the Pit River Nation, Burney, California

D. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, September 5, 2015

The fourth consultation was held at Ramada Inn & Conference Center, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, September 8th, 2015, hosted by the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations representing Seventeen First Nations. Approximately forty-nine individuals attended representing voices of twelve Indigenous Nations as well as the Confederacy. Twenty-two Climate Change questionnaires were completed by participants including Tribal leaders representing approximately 16,468 First Nation citizens. A key outcome of this consultation was that community and Tribal leadership supported the development of a resolution on climate change emphasizing its links to Treaties and the rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was adopted by the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations Chiefs on November 12, 2015.

A focus of concern and discussion at this consultation was the direct impacts on ecosystems, subsistence, and health of the Indigenous Nations of that region, as well as the contribution to global carbon emissions levels, caused by the Tar Sands development in Northern Alberta. The ongoing violations of Treaty Rights and Free Prior and Informed Consent, and the severe impacts on hunting, fishing and health were shared by many participants.



The Tar Sands development in Northern Alberta is the largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada and is a major contributor to global climate change.

Photo from the "Stop the Destruction, Start the Healing" march, June 2013, Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada, courtesy of Keepers of Athabasca. This was one of five photos from the North American region on display in the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion in Paris.

The central importance of Treaty Rights in the context of discussions on Climate Change was expressed by International Chief Wilton Littlechild, Treaties 6, 7 and 8, and a member of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) during his presentation at the Edmonton consultation as follows: *"Climate Change threatens our Treaty Rights to lands, territories, water and other resources; our subsistence rights: hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering; health, traditional cultures and spiritual practices; free, prior and informed consent among others. These are inherent and fundamental to our Right to self-determination that our Treaties evidence and guarantee 'so long as the sun shines, the rivers flow and the grass grows'. As Treaty Nations we need to ensure this understanding and that Treaties are a solution"*.

E. Norman, Oklahoma, October 5, 2015

The fifth consultation was held at Chickasaw Nation, Governors Room, and Riverwind Hotel and Casino, Norman, Oklahoma 5th, 2015. The IITC's consultation partners for this event were the Seminole Sovereignty Initiative and the Chickasaw Nation. Approximately fifty individuals attended representing voices of twenty-one Indigenous Nations. The Consultation was also made available simultaneously on the internet, reaching an additional ninety participants.

Thirty-two Climate Change Questionnaires were completed by participants including by Tribal leaders representing approximately 440 Tribal members. One key outcome was the decision by the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Assistant Chief to propose a resolution on Climate Change as a result of the information presented at the Consultation, which was adopted by the Seminole Nation General Council on October 17, 2015.

The growing frequency of extreme weather events that negatively affect or even destroy local gardens and wild food plants, was discussed by participants from many parts of Oklahoma. These include tornados of increasing intensity, extreme flooding and hail storms alternating with periods of drought, and infestations of previously unknown types of insects.

Chumona Deere representing Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Oklahoma, confirmed these impacts in her presentation: *"We are getting bugs and insects we never saw before in our gardens and they are eating the plants before they can grow. The rain is not coming at the times it used to, it's too early or late, or else it's too much and it's flooding. Now some of the birds we use to hear and see at this time of year are not here anymore. Due to climate change some animals and*

birds have migrated someplace else. The wild plants we used to eat are now growing earlier than normal and are getting too old to eat very quickly, and some are dying out. All of these things were predicted by our grandparents if humans kept on polluting the earth, but now we are seeing it happen. As Indigenous Peoples, we need to know what to do to prepare for these changes”.

Participants also stressed the need for continued focused discussion on solutions with the direct involvement of Tribal Governments, and strong action by the United Nations to keep the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius or below.

Solutions such as Tribal and Community Food Sovereignty Initiatives for restoring traditional seeds, crops and food animals such as buffalo were also supported, and the critical need for the development of such initiatives in Tribal areas was emphasized as a matter of urgency.

F. San Diego, California, October 17, 2015

The sixth consultation took place in San Diego, California in partnership with the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and preceded their Seventy-second Annual Convention and Market Place on October 17. Founded in 1944, the NCAI is the oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization serving the broad interest of over four-hundred tribal governments and communities. The Seventy-second NCAI Annual Convention provided a unique opportunity in 2015 to reach a large and august body of Tribal Leadership from across the United States.

NCAI co-sponsored the consultation, assisted in identifying the local venue, accommodations, and other on the ground logistics, as well as the outreach to Tribal Leadership to raise the visibility of and urge participation in the consultation. An announcement of this event was placed on the NCAI website and also sent to their communications e-lists. In addition, several key indigenous leaders from the Canada were invited to the meeting and provided input into the process. Fifty-five questionnaires were submitted by approximately sixty American Indian leaders present, representing the voices of 93,925 Tribal members.

A key significant outcome of this consultation was the consensus adoption by NCAI Tribal Leaders of the resolution on Climate Change sponsored by the Pit River Tribe on October 23 2015. This resolution was presented to President Obama at the Tribal Leaders White House meeting on November 5th. This and other resolutions adopted by

Tribal Nations and community leaders as a direct result of the seven North American consultations were key advocacy tools at COP 21 in Paris. They were effectively used to influence the positions of the US and Canada in the negotiations, building support in particular for including the right of Indigenous Peoples in the final Paris Agreement.

G. Green Bay, Wisconsin, October 26, 2015

The seventh consultation was held in Green Bay Wisconsin, in Oneida Nation Territory, as a pre-conference session of the First Nations Food Summit. Approximately fifty individuals attended from twenty-three Indigenous Nations. The majority of the participants as well as the program's presenters were traditional food producers including farmers, herders, hunters, gatherers and hunters. Twenty-six questionnaires were submitted by the participants, which included Tribal leaders representing approximately 20,575 Tribal members.

This consultation affirmed the critical importance of current Tribal Nations initiatives focusing on Native Food Sovereignty restoration/protection in the context of Climate Change. It motivated participants toward consideration of individual and joint actions that can be taken now, including the sharing of information and good practices. These included increasing the use of climate resistant traditional seed varieties and seed-saving methods, restoring the buffalo along with Native grasslands, as well as the development of Tribal policies and programs related to sustainable energy production, food production, environmental and ecosystem management.

H. Consultation Video Interviews

At six of the seven consultations, video interviews were conducted with participants to enable the voices of more North American Indigenous Peoples to be included at COP21. Over sixty interviews were consolidated and produced into three half-hour videos for display in the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion, an exhibition space within the conference campus in Paris. Video Interviews focused on perspectives on Climate Change from North American Indigenous leaders, community members, youth, elders, traditional food producers, human rights and environmental activists, Indigenous scientists, spiritual leaders and traditional knowledge holders. They included first-hand accounts of local impacts, calls for action and policy change addressed to countries and the United Nations, and solutions/responses based on traditional knowledge and practices. All three videos can be accessed online at the website of the International Indian Treaty Council at <http://www.iitc.org/program-areas/environmental-health/climate-change-and-food-sovereignty/>.

IV. The “Road to Paris” Climate Change Questionnaire

A. Process and Participation

To assist in facilitating the collection of a diverse range of input from North America, IITC developed a Climate Change Questionnaire focusing on key issues, impacts and solutions for mitigation and adaptation including the role of traditional knowledge and practices. The questionnaire was distributed at the North American consultations and online in English and Spanish via various web sites and list serves. Exceeding the initial goal of two-hundred, the IITC collected and compiled two-hundred and thirteen completed questionnaires including fifteen collected online. As a result of input received from elected and traditional leaders as well as representative organizations, responses were reported to represent the voices of approximately 318,000 North American Indigenous individuals.

Respondents represented a diverse sample of Indigenous Peoples’ representatives including Tribal Leaders (elected and traditional), elders, youth, educators, rights advocates, community organizers, food producers, cultural/spiritual leaders, and professionals. The respondents represented voices from diverse geographical areas across North America and eco-and food systems which included coastal/islands, forests, deserts, mountains, Arctic/sub-arctic, plains, agricultural areas, rivers and river deltas, lakes, wetlands and highlands.

Respondents identified themselves as leaders, representatives or members of the following communities/Tribes/Nations: Diné/Navajo Nation; Ute; Opata; Zuni Pueblo; Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians; Wasco; Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa; Muscogee Creek Nation; Ho-Chunck Nation; Chippewa; Pokagon Band of Potawatomi; Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa; Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe; Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians; Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation; Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe; Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians; North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians; Shoshone-Bannock Tribe of Idaho; Colville Confederated Tribes; Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Patowatomi; Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina; Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Patowatomi; Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina; Coharie Tribe; Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope; Narragansett Tribe; Mashpee Wampanoag; Kumeyaay; Yana; Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation; Taant’akwaan Tlingit; Hopi Nation; Coquille Indian Tribe; Okanagan/Wenatchi; Pauma Tribe; Akiak Native Community; Cahuilla; Umatilla-Walla Walla-Cayuse; Susanville Indian Rancheria; Oneida Nation, Wisconsin; Blackfeet Nation; Gila River Indian Community; Menominee

Nation; Stockbridge Munsee; Mississippi Choctaw; Cherokee Nation; Standing Rock Sioux Tribe; Paiute; Shoshone; The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Oregon; Yakama; Nez Perce; Lenape; Odawa; Onondaga Nation; Yaqui Nation; Pit River Nation (including tribal bands Atsugewi, Illmawi, Atawamsini, Hammawi, Kosealekte, Achomawi, Atsuge); Yocha Dehe Wintu Nation; Saliam/Chumash; Mandan; Anishinaabeg (Ojibwe/Chippewa); Shoshone/Bannock; Mohawk; Dene Nation; Inuit; Penobscot; Nishnawbe Aski; Tl'azt'en Nation; Waganakising Odawak/Odawa; Vuntut Gwitchin; Mississauga Ojibwa; Anishinaabe; Ponca Nation of Oklahoma; Oglala Lakota; Tesuque Pueblo; Laguna Pueblo; Acoma Pueblo; Tohono O'odham; Comanche Nation; Lakota Nation; Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma; Seminole Nation of Oklahoma; Muscogee (Creek) Nation; Iowa Tribe; Red Lake Nation; Seneca Nation; Absentee Shawnee of Oklahoma; Yuchi; Quapaw Nation; Meskwaki Nation; Cheyenne Tribe; Cheyenne & Arapahoe; Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska; Pointe-au Chien Indian Tribe; Lac Vieux Desert; Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa; Boriken Taino, Guainia iukaieke; Ochapow First Nation; Fishing Lake Metis Settlement; Saddle Lake Cree Nation; Beaver Lake Cree Nation; Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation; Maskwacis Cree; Ermineskin Cree; Piikani Nation of the Blackfoot Confederacy; Anishnabe; LutselK'e Dene First Nation; Suhtai-Tsistsistas; Lac Seul First Nation; Maliseet, Woodstock First Nation; Kitchenuhmaykoosib Innunuwug First Nation; Kiowa Tribe; Oneida Nation of the Thames.

Respondents were also affiliated with or were designated representatives of the following organizations, societies institutions, and businesses: Hickory Ground; All Nations United Club; SJC Native American Center; International Indian Treaty Council; Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative (MFSI); Pokagon Sr. Youth Council; Cexaci Youth Council; Ziibimijwang, Inc.; Native American in Philanthropy; United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY); Native Public Media; Native Women's Coalition; Ketchikan Indian Community; Upper Snake River Tribes Foundation; Upper Columbia United Tribes; Indian Child and Family Services; Affiliated Tribes of North West Indians (ATNI); University of Wisconsin; Intertribal Council on Utility Policy; Columbia River InterTribal Fish Commission; Oneida Environmental, Health, & Safety Division; Sitting Bull College; Oneida Environmental Resources Board; Intertribal Agriculture Council; Toiyabe Indian Health; The Assembly of First Nations (AFN); United Confederation of Taino People; Diné College; New Mexico State University; Navajo Agricultural Project Success II; Shiprock Chapter, Diné Dibé Be liná; InterTribal Buffalo Council; Oceti Sakowin; Garcreek Land Project/A.L.M; Seminole Sovereignty Protection Initiative; South Central Climate Science Center; University of Oklahoma; American Indian Chamber of Commerce; Native American's Chance Foundation; Waawasnodeki

Community Center; Ohio State University; National Association of Food Distribution Programs; Whirling Thunder Tribal Organic Farm & Gardens; College of Menominee Nation; University of Wisconsin – Green Bay; University of Wisconsin, Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems; Sustainable Development Institute; University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point; Alberta Environment & Parks, Air & Climate Change Policy Branch; Star School; Diné Agriculture, Inc.; Diné No Nukes; Tesuque Farms; Sierra Club; Navajo Food Sovereignty Alliance; Diné Policy Institute; WorkinBeauty.org; Gallup Solar.org; Gallup Sustainable Board; Gallup Cares: Immediate Action Group; Native American Producer Success Project; Diné Food Sovereignty Alliance; Tsehootsoo Medical Center; Southwest Native Cultures; To Nizhoni Anu; Native Seeds/SEARCH; Chiefs of Ontario; United Tribes of Michigan; Delaware Nation Environmental Office, Eagle & Condor Indigenous Peoples Alliance; Helowa Intertribal Center; Barcone College; Seminole Nation Environmental Office; National Congress of American Indians.

B. Compiled Responses

Surveys completed: 213¹ **Male:** 97 **Female:** 116

What is your role: **Educator:** 7; **Rights advocate:** 5; **Tribal leader:** 57; **Food Producer:** 21; **Community Organizer:** 13; **Cultural/spiritual leader:** 6; **Elder:** 19; **Youth/student:** 51; **Other:** 44

How many individuals/communities' input are represented in your responses? **TOTAL:**
318,491

1. How important is the issue of Climate Change to your Community/Peoples/Tribe/Nation?

Very important: 180; **Important:** 20; **Somewhat Important:** 3; **Not important/don't know:** 3

2. Have you seen impacts of climate change on your environment, weather, food systems and/or land base?

Yes: 209; **No:** 2; **Not sure:** 5

¹ 213 respondents representing 318,491 Indigenous Individuals

3. Please identify specific impacts? (check all that apply)*

- **Change in rainfall or snowfall?**
Increase rainfall: 43; Decrease rainfall: 90;
Increase snowfall: 26; Decrease snowfall: 93
- **Weather changes affecting food production, housing, health and/or public safety:** 158
- **Melting sea ice or permafrost affecting housing, travel, subsistence (hunting and fishing) and/or community land base:** 45
- **Drying lakes, rivers, groundwater sources or other waterways:** 132
- **Significant decrease in growth and/or production levels of traditional food plants, trees and/or seeds:** 100. **If so please estimate % of decrease over past 3-years, if possible:** range reported from 20 – 100% decrease
- **Decrease in numbers of fish, birds and animals used for food:** 108. **If so, please estimate % of decrease over past 3 years, if possible:** range reported from 10 - 80% decrease
- **Increase in extreme weather events (hurricanes, tornados, floods, storms, droughts, etc.):** 139
- **Increasing temperatures:** 130
- **Rising sea levels, salinization of fresh water and food gathering areas:** 35
- **Unpredictable weather affecting food planting, gathering, hunting, fishing:** 129

Other significant changes or impacts? Odd weather; changes in water quality; drier soil; Early winters; shorter summers; birch trees rotting; harder to find red willow; hard to find traditional medicines; Drying forest; Beetle kill fires; coastal erosion; impacts on sacred sites; Wild fires; Long snow, later planting season; invasive species; Well water decreasing; Longer summers; warming waters; significant wind storms; impacts on cultural/religious practices; Ocean acidification; Significant change in Glaciers, snow pack; Riverflow change; wind is different; bees dying off; Disappearing species; animals struggling to adapt; 8 years of drought; flooding; fluctuating lake levels; new pests from the south; unstable conditions for plant survival; impact on roads and buildings; warmer river temperatures affecting salmon runs and spawning; extreme weather impacts people as well as environment; longer summer and fall; increase in Forest Fires; low rivers; Odd weather; changes in water quality; drier soil; Fish die-off; Increase in Beaver population; decrease in water is decrease in human rights; water temperature increase; longer days; deer are not healthy; weather isn't consistent to where there's no labeled seasons; Loss of ground water; dust storms; vegetation change; pollinator die off; New plants; less helpful insects and bees; water and soil contamination; river freeze; oil exploration; land

clearing; air pollution; decrease thunder and lightning; tar sands causing water contamination; fish contamination; earlier snowfall; extreme cold; too much rain at wrong time.

4. Has your community/Tribe/Peoples/Nation had discussions about the impacts of Climate Change in your area?

Yes: 111; **No:** 35; **Planning to:** 29; **Don't Know:** 24

5. Has your community/Tribe/Peoples/Nation had discussions about possible solutions, responses or ways to adapt to Climate Change?

Yes: 78; **No:** 50; **Planning to:** 46; **Don't Know:** 45

6. Have they implemented any solutions, responses or ways to help them adapt?

Yes: 34; **No:** 56; **Planning to:** 48; **Don't Know:** 54

If you checked yes or planning to, please provide example(s): No implementing false solutions like fracking; Conducting vulnerability assessments and adaptation planning; Studying reintroduction of elk to replace declining moose population; Continued restoration of wild rice waters; Greater regulatory protection; Building more resilient infrastructure; Home protection services like gutter installation; Raised beds for planting produced vegetables for food production; Portable shades to reduce too much rain and sun over small garden areas; Energy consumption and limited waste; outfitting buildings with LED; reducing consumption; study loss of animals; seed collections; advocacy at UN; climate change adaptation plan; information dissemination; replanting marsh groves; adaptation to coastal erosion; Wally population is in decline – tribal issues moratorium on Walleye fishing toward recovery; fisheries plan of action; Forest and resource management “programs; increasing bee population and bee pollinator habitat; Moving communities to higher lands (e.g. 5 out of 8 Inupiat - Alaska); Master Stewardship agreement with 3 National Forest (e.g. Pit River Tribe); Building more sustainable structures; conservation of best practices; increased training on disaster preparedness; Forest management – diversity not monoculture; planting 10,000 trees (e.g. Pauma Tribe, CA); We have been planning but no response from State or Federal Agencies (e.g. Akiak Native Community, Alaska); consultations with local authorities; 9 Tribes/Inter-tribal organizations have developed climate impact assessments or adaptation plans; tree planting; food security; species diversity; switch power source from diesel to green energy; seed banking; trading; traditional environmental knowledge (TEK); transport infrastructure strategy including energy; territorial management; work to meet Kyoto

Protocols; altering timing of ceremonies and gathering to account for changing timing of seasons; disaster mitigation plan; Promote landscape approaches; cover crops; agricultural biodiversity; adaption plans; Increase in solar panels; increase bus routes and fuel changes; increased recycling; reduction of food waste in school; straw bale house; geothermal energy; looking for ways to regionalize food; reduce reliance on industrial agriculture; right relations & governance; land access & labor; document records of fishing; protecting the water; heirloom seeds and staggered planting; non-GMO; modify environmental restoration projects to adapt to extreme weather; sustainable food production; They are implementing false solutions like fracking; We conducting vulnerability assessments and adaptation planning; Studying reintroduction of elk to replace declining moose population; Our tribe is co-sponsoring this consultation; river and stream monitoring; growing olives instead of almonds; alternative building materials – earth bags; Assist ranger to cull herd; Food sovereignty; solar energy; household appliance use, travel only when necessary; emission and air quality; our school is off grid, solar and wind powered; discussion w/provincial cooperation; awareness raising; codify customary law; litigation.

7. Do you think that your own Peoples' Traditional Knowledge and practices can be useful in addressing or responding to the impacts of climate change?

Yes: 204; No: 6; Don't know: 25

8. If a fund is established to assist Indigenous Peoples around the world to address Climate Change impacts/causes and support adaption, how important is it for Indigenous Peoples to be involved in the management and decision-making?

Essential: 163; Very important: 44; Somewhat important: 2; Not important: 1; No opinion: 2

9. How important is it that Indigenous Peoples from all regions, including North America, be able to receive support through this fund, if it is established?

Essential: 158; Very important: 52; Somewhat important: 3; Not important: 1; No opinion: 2

10. If funding and/or technical support was available, what kind of projects or programs would be most helpful to you in addressing the causes of Climate Change or to help your community/Tribe/Nation/Peoples adapt or lessen the impacts?

Check all that apply:

- **Education for community/tribal leaders and members about the causes and impacts of Climate Change, and the rights that are impacted: 183**
- **Programs to protect, preserve and transmit traditional seeds and other food sources, methods and practices: 177**
- **Access to and development of sustainable energy sources as an alternative to fossil fuels: 154**
- **Support for work to halt resource use that contributes to climate change: 124**
- **Water collection and saving, sustainable water use: 134**
- **Programs to prevent erosion, conserve and/or restore wetlands, rivers and waterways = 144**
- **Programs to conserve and/or restore forests or other depleted ecosystems: 140**
- **Assistance to relocate your community from eroding coastal or other threatened areas: 58**
- **Other (give examples):** History demonstrates these funds will be wasted, therefore we should go to other tribes actually working against climate change and alternative energy sources; We do a couple of those already, continuing the dialogue about how boarding school trauma hems in who we think of as "leaders"; Veganism, ending multi-national animal agriculture; programs to protect sacred sites; wild rice; training to educate tribal members to recognize false claims by climate deniers; increased transportation; restoring traditional practices and world view; Legal action; research; youth education; education on adaptation; support for community health programs; advocacy for rights to land and resources; traditional conservation; implement adaptation plans; tribal colleges; flood planning; resources to make food production more resilient; allow for migration to follow plants northward; stop investment in fossil fuel & nuclear power; land recovery and repatriation; Treaty implementation; Walking; biking; solar; shift power to individual not grid; attend UN meetings; funding support for Indigenous consultants in small communities; drought resilient seeds; our school is off grid, solar and wind powered; Cultural education; health: allergy and asthma; legal reform.

11. If funding should become available through a UN process, who should channel or manage the disbursement of these funds?

- **The United Nations: 12**
- **State/Federal Governments in each county: 4**
- **A new Board/Committee established by the UN with Indigenous Peoples' full and effective participation: 99**
- **A new Board/ Committee made up of only Indigenous Peoples from all regions: 110**
- **Another existing or new mechanism or entity (identify or describe):** "A network of Tribes and communities; Seems like its important to have diversity represented and a mechanism for guiding the process. Having worked in the non profit grant making sector, the programming piece should reflect the communities that are served and the board should include people that are not just executive leaders.;" NCAI, IITC, AIM; Native Americans in Philanthropy: 10
- **I don't have enough information to answer this now/No opinion: 28**

12. What is the traditional means of subsistence for your Community/People/Nation (check all that apply):

- **Fishing: 131**
- **Hunting: 163**
- **Marine mammal: 20**
- **Farming: 112**
- **Gathering: 136**
- **Herding/pastoralism: 36**
- **Other: shellfish gathering; trapping; small gardens, wild rice cultivation**

13. Describe your land base, area or ecosystem (Check all that apply):

- **Forest: 98**
- **Coastal/island: 22**
- **Desert: 41**
- **Mountain: 47**
- **Arctic/subarctic: 7**
- **Plains: 63**
- **Other (describe): Farms; Woodland Lakes; Inland water; Great Lakes; Columbia River; Woodlands; Waterways; swamp & highlands; Wetlands; Delta**

14. Any additional comments or suggestions?: Travel Scholarship opportunities; Webinars; I am so happy to be seeing this addressed on a tribal level!; Pollution in Lake Michigan is being caused by nuclear reactors cause the death of thousands of fish and animals; Indigenous governments must enjoy permanent and regular status at the UN; How much warming of Pacific because of Fukushima; We must include restoration projects; non-federally recognized tribes, non-status Indians, and Indigenous Peoples of U.S. Territories must be included in the conversation; Federal agencies do not manage their resources well and we are being affected as their fires move on to our lands; Climate change can't stop if Geo-Engineering is altering climate; We need this information to get to the leaders so we can share with the people; Legislation should be enacted to allow Tribes to take over forest management on Federal lands within and adjacent to their ancestral lands; There is only \$10 Million nationwide from the Bureau of Indian Affairs for US Tribes to prepare of Climate Change impacts; Seeing birds we have never seen before; how do we combat international conglomerates who control state governments and will protect their profits?; Can't fish-mercury in water, can't hunt, the municipality doesn't recognize; Farming near uranium mine; Need green-IP alliance; TEK; More of our people need to know what is going on; Tree planting; Water storage; Food processing; exploitation of natural resources is twofold trouble for us; stock and field rotation; We need to see land as sacred and not a resource; Stop geo engineering and spraying forest; Polluter pays; ban toxins; Promote and make accessible real green energy, not cause destruction to water, animals, food, ecosystem, cultural resources, and so on...; Promote trade crops; Elders teach youth; Stop the type of economic practices responsible for the domino effect that ends in an uninhabitable planet for mankind; Bio-cultural restoration of IP land and water systems; Global data base of tools, info, support, monitoring, successes; Indigenous Peoples Need to Lead by Example; We need programs for alternative energy and technology; Reach out to non-status metis; Use treaties and customary law; Canada cannot deny Climate Change; Tar sands have negative health impacts

C) Summary of Compiled Responses

1. 94% of respondents affirmed the Climate Change was very important or important to their Community/Peoples/Tribe/Nation.

2. 98% of respondents have seen impacts of climate change on their environment, weather, food systems and/or land base.

3. Respondents identified specific impacts of Climate Change including:

- a) Change in rainfall or snowfall: Increase rainfall: 20% of respondents; Decrease in rainfall: 42% of respondents; Increase snowfall: 12% of respondents; Decrease snowfall: 44% of respondents
- b) 74% of respondents affirm weather changes affecting food production, housing, health and/or public safety
- c) 21% of respondents affirm melting sea ice or permafrost affecting housing, travel, subsistence (hunting and fishing) and/or community land base
- d) 62% of respondents affirm drying lakes, rivers, groundwater sources or other waterways
- e) 47% of respondents affirm significant decrease in growth and/or production levels of traditional food plants, trees and/or seeds. These respondents estimate 20-100% of decrease over past 3-years.
- f) 51% of respondents reported a decrease in numbers of fish, birds and animals used for food. Respondents who reported a decrease estimated a range of decrease from 10 - 80% over the past 3 years.
- g) 65% of respondents affirm an increase in extreme weather events (hurricanes, tornados, floods, storms, droughts, etc.)
- h) 61% of respondents affirm increasing temperatures
- i) 16% of respondents affirm rising sea levels, salinization of fresh water and food gathering areas
- j) 61% of respondents affirm unpredictable weather affecting food planting, gathering, hunting, fishing

4. 52% of respondents affirm their community/Tribe/Peoples/Nation had discussions about the impacts of Climate Change in their area. 16% reported "no" discussions, 14% reported "planning to", and 11% "Did Not Know".

5. 37% of respondents affirmed their community/Tribe/Peoples/Nation had discussions about possible solutions, responses or ways to adapt to Climate Change. 23% reported “no” discussions, 22% reported “planning to”, and 21% “Did Not Know”.

6. 16% of respondents reported that their community/Tribe/Peoples/Nation are implementing solutions, responses or ways to help them adapt to Climate Change. 26% reported “no” implementation, 23% reported “planning to”, and 25% “Did Not Know”.

7. 96% affirmed that their own Peoples’ Traditional Knowledge and practices can be useful in addressing or responding to the impacts of climate change.

8. If a fund is established to assist Indigenous Peoples around the world address Climate Change impacts/causes and support adaption, 97% of respondents affirmed that it is “essential/very important” for Indigenous Peoples to be involved in the management and decision-making.

9. 98% of respondents affirmed the importance of that Indigenous Peoples from all regions, including North America, be able to receive support through this fund, if it is established.

10. If funding and/or technical support was available, respondents identified the following projects or programs would be most helpful in addressing the causes of Climate Change or help their community/Tribe/Nation/Peoples adapt or lessen the impacts.

a) 86% of respondents affirmed as a funding priority: Education for community/tribal leaders and members about the causes and impacts of Climate Change, and the rights that are impacted.

b) 83% of respondents affirmed as a funding priority: Programs to protect, preserve and transmit traditional seeds and other food sources, methods and practices.

c) 72% of respondents affirmed as a funding priority: Access to and development of sustainable energy sources as an alternative to fossil fuels.

d) 58% of respondents affirmed as a funding priority: Support for work to halt resource use that contributes to climate change.

e) 63% of respondents affirmed as a funding priority: Water collection and saving, sustainable water use.

f) 68% of respondents affirmed as a funding priority: Programs to prevent erosion, conserve and/or restore wetlands, rivers and waterways.

g) 66% of respondents affirmed as a funding priority: Programs to conserve and/or restore forests or other depleted ecosystems.

h) 27% of respondents affirmed as a funding priority: Assistance to relocate your community from eroding coastal or other threatened areas.

11. If funding should become available through a UN process, respondents identified preferences for who should channel or manage the disbursement of these funds including:

a) The United Nations: 6%

b) State/Federal Governments in each county: 2%

c) A new Board/Committee established by the UN with Indigenous Peoples' full and effective participation: 46%

d) A new Board/ Committee made up of only Indigenous Peoples from all regions: 51%

e) Another existing or new mechanism or entity (identify or describe): 5%

f) Respondents who did not feel they had enough information to answer this now/No opinion: 13%

D. Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Both the consultation inputs and questionnaire responses affirmed that climate change is an increasing priority and concern for Indigenous Peoples in North America. 94% of the respondents stated that this issue is either very important or important for their

Tribal Nations, Peoples and communities. 98% reported that they have already seen impacts of climate change. The importance of addressing climate change was consistently affirmed by Indigenous Peoples across diverse geographical, food and eco-systems throughout North America.

Based on input received from Indigenous Peoples in both the questionnaires and in presentations and comments made during the consultations, specific recommendations and lessons learned included:

1. The importance of maintaining ongoing dialogue within and among Indigenous Nations and Peoples including Tribal Leaders and members to discuss impacts and develop solutions and responses to climate change, starting at the Tribal Nation/community/local level;
2. The urgent need for increased focus on climate change in the strategies and activities of Indigenous national, regional and community/Tribal food sovereignty initiatives, including the important/essential role of restoring and protecting traditional food sources and methods;
3. The importance of ongoing intergenerational, interdisciplinary knowledge-sharing about all aspects of climate change (causes, solutions, prevention, adaptation), in particular by traditional knowledge holders and between youth and elders;
4. The need to create ongoing opportunities for sharing solutions/adaptation models being implemented in tribal communities;
5. The essential importance of asserting a rights based approach in all aspects related to climate change (prevention, adaption and real solutions), including calling for full implementation of the inherent rights affirmed in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including rights to lands and resources, subsistence, environment, FPIC, treaties, health, traditional knowledge, sacred sites and cultural rights among others;
6. Through three adopted climate change-related resolutions (National Congress of American Indians, Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations, and Seminole Nation of Oklahoma) and one conference declaration (Shiprock, New Mexico) Tribal

leaders and Chiefs affirmed the need to prioritize these discussions on a Tribal Nation level to develop programs addressing climate change including through restoration of traditionally-used plants, animals and ecosystems (grass lands, wet lands etc.);

7. An overwhelming majority of consultation participants and questionnaire respondents (96%) affirmed the importance of Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge in reversing, preventing, mitigating and adapting to climate change. Many expressed that this will be the foundation of our survival as Indigenous Peoples in the coming years;
8. Participants consistently expressed that the US, Canada and other countries, as well as the United Nations, need to make a significant commitment of financial resources to Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities to assist them in developing policies and programs related to climate change, and that Indigenous Peoples need to be directly involved in the development and implementation of such funding programs;
9. Concerns were consistently expressed by participants that the United States and Canada do not recognize, respect or implement the right of Indigenous Peoples to FPIC as recognized in UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Instead these countries interpret this right to be "consultation", which does not include the right to oppose or halt development projects known to produce large quantities of greenhouse gasses (coal mining and burning, fracking, tar sands, oil drilling, etc.);
10. At each consultation, the impacts of global temperature rise and its link to local impacts were presented and discussed in depth. Examples included increasing impacts on traditional foods, and extreme weather events such as tornados, floods, droughts and fires. As a result, participants collectively supported a global temperature goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius or lower was consistently affirmed by the participants, consistent with the position of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change and the Global Indigenous Peoples Caucus at previous sessions of the Conference of the Parties (COP).

V. The 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21)

“As a tribal member of the Navajo Nation and a part of the Global Indigenous Peoples Caucus in Paris, I can see that our presence is critical to ensure that the rights of Indigenous Peoples are included in this legally-binding Climate Agreement”.

--- **Wahleah Johns, Diné Nation, Black Mesa Water Coalition**

A. Participation from North America supported by the “Road to Paris” Initiative

A call to consultation partners and key networks of North American Indigenous Peoples focusing on Climate Change initiatives and advocacy was distributed by the IIPFCC Global Steering Committee members Andrea Carmen and Chief Bill Erasmus in June 2015. As a result of this call, seventeen Indigenous delegates from North America were nominated and funded in full or in part by the Road to Paris Initiative. The delegation balanced a diverse range of Indigenous Peoples representation including elected and traditional Tribal Nation/First Nations leaders and Chiefs, grass roots and international organization leaders and activists, elders and youth, food producers, traditional knowledge holders, and men and women from the US, Canada and Mexico.

North American Indigenous delegates were accredited, based on the process established by the UNFCCC to attend COP21 through the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), and Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN). Delegates funded via the UNDP Road to Paris Initiative included: **Nicole Maria Yanes**, IITC Youth representative, Opata Nation, Sonora Mexico/Tucson, Arizona USA, (IITC); **Francois Paulette**, Smith Landing First Nation, Chair of the Dene Elders Council, Dene Nation, Canada (IITC); **Chief Wilton Littlechild**, International Chief, Treaties 6, 7 and 8, member of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), WEOG region, Ermineskin Cree Nation, Alberta, Canada (IITC); **National Chief Perry Bellegarde**, Assembly of First Nations, Little Black Bear First Nation, Treaty Four Territory, Saskatchewan, Canada (NARF); **Marshall McKay**, elder and knowledge holder, representing Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, California, USA, Tribal Chairman Emeritus, current member, YDWN Tribal Cultural and Economic Development Committees (IITC); **Roberto Borrero**, NA Regional Coordinator, Taino, United Confederation of Taino People, (IITC); **Rochelle Diver**, designated representative of Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Indians, Minnesota, USA (IITC); **Grand Chief Edward John**, First Nations Summit, British Columbia Canada, North America Expert Member UN

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (IITC); **Maria Berenice Sanchez Lozada**, Nahuat and Otomi, Di Sugave a Nana Shimjaí, San Francisco Magu, Mexico (IITC); **Chief Bill Erasmus**, Dene Nation, Global Steering Committee Member, Canada (IITC); **John Sirius**, Upper Columbia United Tribes and Colville Confederated Tribes, elected leader U.S.A, (NARF); **Donald Sampson**, Climate Change Project Coordinator for the Affiliated Tribes of NW Indians, 57 Regional Tribes, Confederated Tribe of Umatilla member, U.S.A. (NARF) **Kim Gottschalk**, Attorney, Native American Rights Fund, Technical Team Member, U.S.A, (NARF); **Andrea Carmen**, Yaqui Nation, Executive Director, International Indian Treaty Council, U.S.A (IITC); **Wahleah Johns**, Dineh Nation, Solar Project staff, Black Mesa Water Coalition, U.S.A (IEN); **Eriel Deranger**, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Executive Assistant to Chief Allen Adam, Canada (IEN); **Crystal Lameman**, Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Treaty Coordinator, Treaty 6, Canada (IEN); **Frank Ettawageshik**, elder, Little Traverse Band of Odawa Indians, National Congress of American Indians (NARF); and Haudenosaunee Faithkeeper **Oren Lyons**, who transferred his funding support to other delegates after his identification of other sources of funding. Additional delegates from North America participated with other sources of support.

Delegates funded in part by this Initiative included: **Jennifer Anne Duncan**, Dene Nation, Attorney, Canada (IITC); **Casey Camp-Horinek**, elder, Ponca Nation, Drum Keeper, Women's Scalp Dance Society, U.S.A (IEN)

B. Indigenous Peoples' Positions at COP 21

In collaboration with the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) and the Indigenous Peoples Caucus in Paris, and reflecting the direct input from North American Indigenous Peoples through the consultations, questionnaires, and video interviews, the unified positions by Indigenous Peoples from all regions were consolidated in four key advocacy positions at the 21st Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC-COP21). Of these four positions, three were policy related and advocated for by Indigenous Peoples during the two-week session as follows:

A. Recognition, protection and respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples within a broad human rights framework in both the preamble and the operative sections of the Legally Binding Agreement;

B. A temperature goal of no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius increase over pre-industrial levels;

C. Recognition, respect for and use of **Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge**, with their free, prior, and informed consent, in measures for adaption to climate change.

In addition, Indigenous Peoples also advocated for:

D. A **Global Climate Change Fund** for Indigenous Peoples to be developed and managed by Indigenous Peoples and accessible by Indigenous Peoples from all regions of the world.

C. Indigenous Peoples Advocacy and Activism in Paris

During the two weeks of COP21, Indigenous Peoples meeting daily at the Global Caucus (IIPFCC) meetings, as well as at separately arranged regional meetings. A two-day Global Caucus meeting and a North American delegation meeting also took place on the weekend prior to the opening of COP 21 (November 27 – 28).

Under the auspices of the International Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change (IIPFCC), Indigenous Peoples also organized several press briefings alone or in collaboration with other human rights organizers during the session. In addition, Indigenous delegates from all regions re-engaged the “Friends of Indigenous Peoples” group, a loose coalition of States that were previously supportive of Indigenous Peoples positions in other UN Forums, and the inclusion of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the final Paris Agreement.

IITC, along with other Indigenous Peoples representatives with significant experience in standard setting at the United Nations, were able to effectively utilize longstanding relationships with key State government representatives and ambassadors in this initiative. These contacts proved to be instrumental in Paris. For example, the delegation of the Government of Mexico led by Ambassador Luis de Alba, who was President of the UN Human Rights Council when the UN Declaration on



Some North American delegation members meeting with Mexican Ambassador Luis de Alba. In Photo from left Ambassador de Alba, Roberto Borrero, Gina Cosentino, Kenneth Deer and Jennifer Duncan

the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted in 2006, played a key role in facilitating outreach to other States in this regard. In response to Indigenous Peoples' and other human rights advocates, Ambassador de Alba convened a "Friends of the Principles" group that included the supporting the rights of Indigenous Peoples along with Human Rights in general in the Paris Agreement. Ambassador De Alba's initiative was welcomed and supported by Indigenous Peoples and a number of State Parties including Peru, Costa Rica, Chile, Philippines, Palau, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Luxemburg representing the European Union, among others. Ambassador De Alba also attended a meeting of the Indigenous Caucus to update and explain this coordination and advocacy, as well as the challenges, to the delegations of Indigenous Peoples from all regions.

The International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC), which includes members of the North American region, also organized three press conferences and four "actions" (or demonstrations) inside the COP21 Conference area to highlight Indigenous Peoples' concerns and positions throughout the two-week session. The demonstrations directly engaged Governmental representatives, UN agency staff, and media on their way to official meetings. In addition, a number of demonstrations and events were organized by various organizations outside the UN venue around Paris during the duration of the Conference to call attention to Indigenous Peoples concerns and perspectives about the UN process as well as climate change causes and impacts in their communities and homelands.



The International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change organized three actions and three press conferences within the COP21 campus in Paris to bring attention to concerns regarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples within the emerging Paris Agreement text.



Meeting of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) in Paris.

VI. COP21: Outcomes and Impacts of Indigenous Peoples' Participation

Governments Parties at COP21 officially adopted the Paris Agreement on Saturday, December 12, 2015 after two weeks of very difficult negotiations that extended through the final night. The Agreement, with the legal force of a UN Treaty, was adopted by all the one-hundred and ninety-five States (countries) present. Once ratified by at least fifty-five States, the Paris Agreement will go into legal force in 2020. It commits all countries, for the first time ever, to cut their carbon emissions while also recognizing the special circumstances of developing countries. The States also adopted the “Paris Decision”, which is not legally binding, but commits States to immediately begin the process of reducing greenhouse emissions that cause climate change.

The Indigenous Peoples Climate Change Consultations in North America, as well as the input gathered through similar processes in other regions, affirmed Indigenous Peoples' collective support for the following human rights language in both the preamble and the operative section of the legally-binding Paris agreement: *“All Parties shall, in all climate change related actions, respect, protect, promote, and fulfill human rights for all, including the rights of indigenous peoples...”*

The IIPFCC closing statement, read at the final COP 21 Plenary on December 12th by elder Frank Ettawageshik from the North America region, expressed that Indigenous Peoples were “keenly disappointed” at the shortfalls of the Agreement, in particular the inclusion of Human Rights and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the preamble but not in the operative section. However he also noted that all three of the Indigenous Peoples key policy positions were “addressed to some degree” in the final outcome documents of COP21 in Paris.

The North American Indigenous Peoples delegation, in collaboration with the other regions, had a significant impact on the UNFCCC negotiations and Paris agreement outcome. The delegation participated actively in advocating for the rights of Indigenous Peoples among and with NGO constituencies participating at COP21. As a result there was a general solidarity built across constituencies that assisted in raising the visibility of Indigenous Peoples, impacting the negotiations and the outcome documents. Various news articles circulated during the conference time period affirming that calls for the rights of Indigenous Peoples went beyond the Indigenous Peoples. In solidarity, several civil society organized actions and press conferences also reached out to include the voices of Indigenous Peoples.



North American and Arctic delegates debriefing at COP21

At COP21, one of the best examples of North American Indigenous Peoples’ impact on government positions was the position on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the 1.5 degree temperature goal advocated by the government of Canada during the conference. Canada’s position, representing a complete turnaround from previous Canadian governmental positions, was clearly articulated and documented in several news articles and was noted by other State negotiators as well. These positions were directly impacted by the strong advocacy by First Nations and Inuit representatives, Chiefs and leaders in Paris who consistently met with the Prime Minister and other Canadian government delegates throughout the session. As a notable outcome, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s opening High Level Plenary speech specifically mentioned Indigenous Peoples. The Prime Minister of Canada and the President of Tuvalu were the only two heads of state to mention Indigenous Peoples in their addressed to the opening plenary at COP 21.²

² The President of Tuvalu’s recognition of Indigenous Peoples was the result of the advocacy of Pacific Indigenous Peoples in particular.

A. Indigenous Peoples, Rights and Traditional Knowledge in the Paris Agreement

As a direct result of the coordinated, consistent advocacy by the Indigenous Peoples delegations at COP21 from all regions, there are five specific references to Indigenous Peoples in the Paris Agreement document [FCCC/CP/2015/L.9.], as follows:



Elder Angel Valencia sharing Yaqui Traditional knowledge and practices for the survival of Sonora desert food and medical plants with younger generations to ensure resiliency and survival in response to changing climate conditions. Photo courtesy of Nicole Yanes, Light is Life Student Food Sovereignty Program, Tucson Arizona, USA, May 2014. This was one of five photos from the North American region on display in the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion in Paris.

1) Preambular Paragraph 8 on page 1 states 'Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind. Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, **the rights of indigenous peoples**, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity.'

2) Preambular Paragraph 16 on page 2 states "Agreeing to uphold and promote regional and international cooperation in order to mobilize stronger and more ambitious climate action by all Parties and non-Party stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, financial

institutions, cities and other subnational authorities, local communities and **indigenous peoples**."

3) In PARIS AGREEMENT ANNEX, on page 20, Preambular Paragraph 12 states "Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind. Parties when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, **the rights of indigenous peoples**, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality and empowerment of women and intergenerational equity."

4) The Paris Agreement, on page 19 V. Non-Party Stakeholders, paragraph 136 states "Recognizes the need to strengthen knowledge, technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and **indigenous peoples** related to addressing and responding to climate change, and establishes a platform for exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner."

5) In the ANNEX, on page 24, Article 7, Para 5 states "Parties acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a country driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, **traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples** and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socio-economic policies and actions, where appropriate."

It should be noted that this is only the second instance that the term "Indigenous Peoples" is included without qualification in any legally-binding UN Treaty, and the first time it is included in a UN Environmental Treaty.³ Indigenous Peoples in Paris strongly advocated for the inclusion of a specific reference to the "Rights of Indigenous Peoples" in both the operative and the preamble sections, but were able to achieve it only in the preamble. IITC agrees with many Indigenous legal experts and rights advocates in affirming even this partial victory as an incremental advance for the recognition of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples under international law, and affirms the final assessment provided by International attorney and EMRIP member Chief Wilton Littlechild as follows: *"...the preamble of a Treaty provides the context and framework for interpreting and implementing the entire document."* The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties supports this assessment.

B. Global Temperature Goal in the Paris Agreement

Indigenous Peoples from all regions consistently affirmed that the Global Temperature Goal at COP 21 must be 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels in order to safeguard Indigenous Peoples traditional ways of life. This position was also advocated by a large number of States, including the Small Island Nations from around the world. However, this was hotly contested by other States as "too ambitious". The final negotiated Agreement on this issue affirmed a goal of "well below 2 °C" while also

³ Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005) also includes the term "Indigenous Peoples" without qualification.

recognizing the 1.5 °C position advocated by many delegations. The specific references to the 1.5 Global Temperature Goal include:

1. Preambular Paragraph 10 states “Emphasizing with serious concern the urgent need to address the significant gap between the aggregate effect of Parties’ mitigation pledges in terms of global annual emissions of greenhouse gases by 2020 and aggregate emission pathways consistent with holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above preindustrial levels and pursuing efforts to **limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C.**”

2) Section II, INTENDED NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS, Article 17 on page 3, “Notes with concern that the estimated aggregate greenhouse gas emission levels in 2025 and 2030 resulting from the intended nationally determined contributions do not fall within least-cost 2 °C scenarios but rather lead to a projected level of 55 gigatonnes in 2030, and also notes that much greater emission reduction efforts will be required than those associated with the intended nationally determined contributions in order to hold the increase in the global average temperature to below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels by reducing emissions to 40 gigatonnes or to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels by reducing to a level to be identified in the special report referred to in paragraph 21 below.” Paragraph 21 states “Invites the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to provide a special report in 2018 on the impacts of **global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels** and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways.”

3) Article 2a in the ANNEX states “Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to **1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels**, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.”

C) Global Climate Change Fund for Indigenous Peoples

The presentation and discussion of a proposal to establish a Global Climate Change Fund for Indigenous Peoples took place at all the North American Climate Change consultations. The proposal for such a fund was a concept of Indigenous Peoples, which generated the interest of the Government of Norway who engaged the United Nations Development Programme to conduct a feasibility study in partnership with the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change. During the regional and national consultations and via the data received through the IITC developed North

American Climate Change Questionnaire focusing on key issues, impacts, solutions, mitigation, and adaptation.

According to the North American Climate Change Questionnaire 97% of participants affirmed that it is “essential/very important” for Indigenous Peoples to be involved in the management and decision-making of such a fund. In addition, 98% of participants affirmed that Indigenous Peoples from all regions, including North America, be able to receive support through this fund, if it is established. 51% of North American Indigenous Peoples responding to the Climate Change Questionnaire preferred that a new Board/Committee made up of only Indigenous Peoples from all regions should channel or manage the disbursement of these funds, while 46% preferred that a new Board/Committee established by the UN with Indigenous Peoples’ full and effective participation take on such responsibilities.

During the lead up to the meeting Paris, the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) in collaboration UNDP organized several meetings with the Government of Norway and the Indigenous regional representatives to discuss this initiative and possible ways forward with a goal of announcing a Global Fund in during COP21. While a significant focus of the “Road to Paris” Initiative was dedicated to promoting this proposal, due to lack of commitment by potential donor Governments to the project no Global Fund was established.



Faith Spotted Eagle, Casey Camp-Horinek, François Paulette, and Ron Lameman share their perspectives on the Global Climate Crises at the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion on North American Indigenous Peoples Day, Dec. 1, 2015

D. Indigenous Peoples Pavilion Programming at COP 21

At the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion (IPP) at the COP21 campus, successful programming raising the visibility of North American Indigenous Peoples concerns in relation to Climate Change was completed via a full day North American Indigenous Peoples Day event held on December 1, 2015 and participation in the Grand Opening program for the IPP on the same day. The North American Indigenous Peoples Day program discussion themes were a direct outcome of the North American Climate Change consultations. The IPP was visited by several thousand people over the course of the two-week conference.⁴

E. Video Presentations

The three half-hour videos with interviews from the Consultations with North American Indigenous Peoples were presented at the IPP in the Climate Generations Space at COP21.



One of the thousands of visitors to the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion views an interview with Duane Chili Yazzie of the Diné/Navajo Nation, in an IITC-produced video from the Green Bay, Wisconsin, Climate Change Consultation in Oneida Nation Territory.

⁴ See Appendix pg. 45 for the full North American Indigenous Day Program

F. Photographic displays

North American Global Steering Committee members Andrea Carmen and Bill Erasmus issued a call for Climate Change related photos from various partners for possible display at the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion. As a result of the call, ten photos were submitted to UNDP to be considered for inclusion in the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion exhibition. Out of ten photos submitted per regional delegation, five photos per region were chosen by UNDP and the IIPFCC Global Steering Committee Co-Chairs for display in the IPP in Paris. Five photos and explanatory captions shared by members of the North American delegation were enlarged and displayed at the IPP.



Chief Bill Erasmus of the Dene Nation, Northern Canada, left, with other Indigenous Peoples' representatives at one of the demonstrations organized by the IIPFCC within the COP21 campus.

G. Communications

Leading up to and during COP21 the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) engaged its extensive e-news list for tribal leaders and organizations, as well as its Social Media resources (including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn) to outreach directly to over 20,000 unique contacts. IITC's popular website www.iitc.org was also updated to support all the activities to date (see page on "Climate Change", "News & Updates", "E-News", and "Events"). IITC also engaged media outlets leading up to and during COP21, as well as worked in collaboration with or were supported by other media initiatives, leading to the publishing of at least twenty-three news stories (including radio

interviews) highlighting or including North American Indigenous Peoples.

News stories featuring members of the North American Indigenous Peoples delegation included: **Chief Perry Bellegarde**, CBC News, 11/30; **Andrea Carmen**, Thomson Reuters Foundation, 12/2; **Chief Perry Bellegarde**, APTN, 12/4; **Chief Wilton Littlechild**; **Crystal Lameman**, APTN, 12/4; **Andrea Carmen**; **Chief Bill Erasmus**, Consortium News, 12/5; **Crystal Lameman**, Desmog Blog, 12/06; **Chief Ed John**; **Chief Perry Bellegarde**; **Eriel Deranger**, APTN, 12/7; **Casey Camp-Horinek**, Mashable, 12/7; **Eriel Deranger**, **Crystal Lameman**, Guardian UK, 12/07; **Chief Ed John**; **Crystal Lameman**, National Observer, 12/7; **Andrea Carmen**, Indian Country Today, 12/8; **Roberto Borrero**, Hill Times Online, 12/08; **Andrea Carmen**; **Wahleah Johns**, Native News Online, 12/9; **Andrea Carmen**, **Chief Ed John**, APTN, 12/9; **Frank Ettawageshik**, **Andrea Carmen**, Indian Country Today, 12/9; **Francois Paulette**, Canadian Press, 12/10; **Casey Camp-Horinek**, PRI's The World, 12/10; **Chief Perry Bellegarde**, Toronto Star, 12/10; **Frank Ettawageshik**; **Crystal Lameman**; **Eriel Deranger**, Desmog Blog, 12/10; **Kenneth Deer**, APTN, 12/11; **Frank Ettawageshik**, Reuters, UK, 12/12; **Frank Ettawageshik**, Native News Online, 12/13; and **Andrea Carmen**, Public News Service – New Mexico, 12/21.



Attending one of the early morning Indigenous Peoples Caucus meetings, IITC Youth delegate Nicole Yanes holding the “hashtag” #indigenousCOP21 used to raise the online visibility of Indigenous Peoples during the COP21 conference. (IITC Photo)

VII. Next Steps, Follow-up and Ongoing Work

Some of the follow up activities since COP21 carried out by IITC representatives, GSC members and other Indigenous delegates from North America that were funded via the Road to Paris Initiative include:

1) Intertribal Bison Council Annual Meeting, Las Vegas Nevada December 10, presentation by Andrea Carmen on outcomes from COP21 and the role of buffalo restoration in mitigation and adaptation to Climate Change in North America;

2) Follow-up and report back to the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations Chiefs and community members, UN EMRIP NA/WEOG expert member, with focus on the COP21 Paris outcome document in relation to Rights to Health, Treaties and Subsistence, Enoch Cree Nation, Alberta Canada, January 7-8, 2016 and next steps for implementation in international arena;

3) Follow up meeting with UNDP January 22, 2016, New York City, including discussions of next steps for the IIPFCC and follow-up activities at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 15 the session in May 2016;

4) United Nations Expert Group Meeting for the current EMRIP Study on Right to Health for Indigenous Peoples Andrea Carmen and Danika Littlechild (IITC Legal Counsel) invited to present on Environmental Health including Climate Change and COP21 outcomes as an advance in the international Human Rights Framework for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, McGill University, Montreal Canada, February 21-22, 2016.

IITC's submission regarding the International Legal Framework supporting the Right to Health for Indigenous Peoples and specifically the right to Environmental Health included the importance of the Paris Agreement.

5) National Congress of American Indians Winter Executive Session, Washington DC, February 23 – 25, COP21 report back, attended by Andrea Carmen and Frank Ettewageshik. Elder Ettewageshik presented on the outcomes to the plenary on February 23, 2016.

6) Consultation with the U.S. State Department, February 25, Washington DC, on international developments on various topics including Climate Change and COP21 outcomes and follow-up, hosted by NCAI.

7) First Ministers Meeting, Vancouver BC Canada, meeting with provincial and territorial ministers and Prime Minister Trudeau and First Nations Chiefs, Metis and Inuit leaders to discuss follow up to COP21, March 2, 2016, attended by Dene Nation Chief, GSC member and AFN executive member along with other Chiefs and leaders.

In addition IITC has recently received notification of a grant from the Agro-ecology Fund for a project entitled “Indigenous Peoples Alliance for Traditional Knowledge, Food Sovereignty and Climate Change” which will include 4 gatherings from July 2016 – February 2017 (1 in North America, 2 in Latin America and 1 in the Pacific Region) as a follow-up to the work achieved through this initiative. These workshops and conferences will enable IITC to include Indigenous Peoples, Nations and communities from other regions in discussions on the strongly affirmed relationship between Indigenous Peoples traditional subsistence foods and food production/gathering/growing methods and adaptation to the impacts of Climate Change.

Finally, the GSC, Focal Point and Technical Team members and will be monitoring and posting opportunities and next steps for engagement through the UNFCCC and other relevant UN processes, including at COP22 for November 7 – 18th, 2016 in Morocco.

VIII. Closing and Thanks

In closing, the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) expresses our sincere appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), IWIGIA and the Government of Norway for their continued interest and support of this initiative by and for Indigenous Peoples.

The IITC also express sincere appreciation for the partnership of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) throughout this process. We thank our consultation partners and hosts including Assembly of First Nations; National Congress of American Indians; Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations; Diné College; Shiprock Chapter of the Diné (Navajo) Nation, Diné Bikéya; Seminole Sovereignty Protection Initiative; Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma; Seminole Nation of Oklahoma; Oneida Nation of Wisconsin; the Pit River Tribe; and the First Nations Development Institute.

We also express our appreciation to the States (countries) delegations that actively advocated in support of Indigenous Peoples’ positions at COP 21 and worked in partnership with Indigenous Peoples in Paris to achieve the advances that resulted.

Finally we express our appreciation to all the participants who attended the consultations, completed the questionnaire and are working on the ground in all regions to defend their rights and ways of life and future generations in the face of the growing climate crisis.

For all our relations.

Appendix

A. Online Resources including:

- 1) Three North American Consultation Video Interviews;
- 2) *Declaration Southwest Tribal Nations Food Sovereignty Conference and Climate Change Consultation*, Shiprock, New Mexico, 9 August 2015;
- 3) *Resolution of the National Congress of American Indians Calling on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to Adopt an Agreement that Upholds the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Resolution #SD-15-007, 23 October 2015;
- 4) *Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, A Verbal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma General Council Calling on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to Adopt an Agreement on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, TR 2015 – 79, 17 October 2015;
- 5) *Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations Chiefs Resolution*, 12 November 2015.

These resources and others are available at:

<http://www.iitc.org/program-areas/environmental-health/climate-change-and-food-sovereignty/>

B. North American Indigenous Peoples Day at the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion Program, pg. 45

C. International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change Closing Statement to UNFCCC Plenary, pg. 47

D. International Indian Treaty Council Final COP21 Press Release, pg.48



INTERNATIONAL
INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES'
FORUM ON
CLIMATE CHANGE

UNFCCC 21st CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

North America Indigenous Peoples Day

Indigenous Peoples Pavilion

Le Bourget, 180 Esplanade de l'Air et de l'Espace, 93350, Paris, France

Tuesday, December 1, 2015, 11:00 AM – 7:00 PM

**11:00 – 12:15 pm - Traditional Knowledge and Climate Change: Presentations
by North America Indigenous elders, spiritual leaders and
Traditional Knowledge Holders:**

Opening Invocation and drum song: François Paulette

Panelists:

Ronald Lameman, Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations,
Alberta, Canada, *Moderator*

François Paulette, Smith's Landing First Nation, Chair, Dene Nation Elder's Council,
North West Territories, Canada

Casey Camp, Ponca Nation. Drum Keeper, Women's Scalp Dance Society, Oklahoma, USA

**12:30 – 1:45 pm - Responses to Climate Action: Best Practices from North
American Indigenous Peoples**

Panelists:

Frank Ettawageshik, Little Traverse Bands of Odawa Indians, United Tribes of Michigan,
USA, National Congress of American Indians, *Moderator*

Don Sampson, Umatilla Tribe, Affiliated Tribes of NorthWest Indians, Oregon, USA

Wahleah Johns, Dineh Nation, Black Mesa Water Coalition, Arizona, USA

Nicole Yanes, Opata, Youth representative, International Indian Treaty Council

**2:15 – 3:15 pm - Official Opening of Indigenous Peoples Pavilion Space: High-level Event
hosted by the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate
Change (IIPFCC), *Speakers and presenters to be announced.***

3:30 – 4:45 pm - - Climate Change and the Inherent and Treaty Rights of Indigenous Peoples to Food Sovereignty, Culture and Health

Panelists:

Grand Chief Edward John, Tl'azt'en Nation, British Columbia, Canada, North America expert member, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, *Moderator*

Andrea Carmen, Yaqui Nation, International Indian Treaty Council

Chief Wilton Littlechild, Ermineskin Cree Nation, Alberta Canada, International Chief, Treaties 6, 7 and 8; UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples member, WEOG region

Rochelle Diver, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Minnesota, USA

4:55 – 6:45 pm - Film Forum and Roundtable Discussion: North American Indigenous Peoples on the Frontlines of the Climate Crisis

Presenting recent short films documenting the devastating impacts of fossil fuel production and the responses of Indigenous Peoples in the U.S. and Canada.

Roundtable discussion following with:

Dene Nation Chief Bill Erasmus, North West Territories, Canada, *Moderator*

Eriel Deranger, Chipewyan First Nation, Alberta Canada

Crystal Lameman, Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Alberta, Canada

Kandi Mossett, Mandan/Hidatsu/Arikira Nations, Indigenous Environmental Network, North Dakota USA.

6:50 pm - Closing Blessing: François Paulette

ALL DELEGATIONS ATTENDING COP 21 AND THE INTERESTED PUBLIC ARE INVITED



**International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change
Statement at Closing Plenary of UNFCCC COP21**

Paris, France December 12, 2015

Presented by Frank Ettawageshik, supported by Chief Bill Erasmus,
Hindou Ourmou Ibrahim, and Saoudata Aboubacrine

Aanii, Nakwegeshik N'diznikas. Pipigwa Ododem. Waganakising n'doonjibaa. (Hello. Noonday is my name. The Sparrow Hawk is the mark of my family. I am from the Land of the Crooked Tree.

Mr. President, I greeted you in my native language. My name is Frank Ettawageshik and I represent the National Congress of American Indians. Thank you for this opportunity to address you on behalf of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change. Indigenous Peoples are those who least contribute to climate change, having safeguarded our traditional lands, territories and resources for millennia. Because our lives are inextricably and intimately related to the natural world, every adverse effect on that world acutely affects our lives.

The members of our caucus come from all the regions of the world. Indigenous peoples came here with three key messages. We are pleased that during these negotiations all of our points were addressed to some degree.

1. It is essential that the rights of indigenous peoples be recognized, protected and respected within a broad human rights framework. We sought such assurance in the operative section of the Agreement. We are keenly disappointed that the Parties did not see fit to accommodate this request in which we joined with a broad constituency. The Parties do recognize the importance of such rights in the Preamble and we intend to insist on our rights at every turn. We are sovereign governments with international treaties and rights to land territories, and resources toward which we have a sacred duty, which we intend to fulfill.

2. A temperature goal of no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius. We are disappointed this was not adopted as the Structured Expert Dialog stated that our traditional livelihoods will be severely affected at two degrees. However, we are thankful that the vital importance of achieving the 1.5 degree Celsius goal is recognized in the agreement language.

3. Recognition, respect for, and use of our traditional knowledge, with our free, prior, and informed consent. We appreciate that a provision appears in the operative section under adaptation, but it should apply everywhere in the Agreement and Decision without the qualification "where appropriate". We must remember we are here as nations to uphold the future for our children!

We recognize the hope in all children's eyes and we work so that this hope will remain through the future generations.

Miigwetch (Thank You), Merci Beaucoup

For Immediate Distribution, December 16, 2015

Contact: Roberto Borrero, communications@treatycouncil.org

The Paris Agreement: An "Incremental Advance" for International Recognition of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



Paris, France – The 21st Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC-COP21) officially adopted the Paris Agreement on Saturday, December 12, 2015. The Agreement, with the legal force of a UN Treaty, was agreed to by all the 195 States (countries) present. Once ratified by at least 55 States, it will go into legal force in 2020. It commits all countries, for the first time ever, to cut their carbon emissions while also recognizing the special circumstances of developing countries. The States also adopted the "Paris Decision" which is not legally binding, but commits States to immediately begin the process of reducing greenhouse emissions that cause climate change.

Some commentators are denouncing the Paris Agreement as a failure while others are hailing it as an historic triumph. But for Indigenous Peoples, the Paris Agreement can be seen as another step forward for the recognition of their rights in international law.

The International Indigenous Peoples Forum of Climate Change (IIPFCC) and the Indigenous Peoples Caucus representing over 200 indigenous delegates attending this session from around the world, was invited to make a formal statement at the COP21 closing plenary. The IIPFCC closing statement, presented by elder Frank Ettawageshik

(Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians), highlighted the three key messages advocated by Indigenous Peoples during the two-week session. These included a call for the rights of Indigenous Peoples [to] be recognized, protected, and respected within a broad human rights framework in both the preamble and the operative sections of the Agreement; a temperature goal of no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius increase over pre-industrial levels; and recognition, respect for and use of Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge, with their free, prior, and informed consent, in measures for adaptation to climate change. The IIPFCC statement, while expressing that Indigenous Peoples were "keenly disappointed" at the shortfalls in meeting these calls, noted that all three Indigenous Peoples messages were "addressed to some degree" in the final Agreement.

In particular, the inclusion of "the rights of Indigenous Peoples" in the preamble paragraph of the Agreement, achieved despite the consistent opposition of some States throughout the process, is a significant and unprecedented step forward. This is only second instance that the term "Indigenous Peoples" appears unqualified in a legally binding UN Treaty, and the first for an environmental treaty. The reference to the rights of Indigenous Peoples also was included in the preamble of the Paris Decision, although both say that States "should consider", while Indigenous Peoples and human rights advocates called for the use of the stronger word "shall".

As noted by hereditary Chief Damon Corrie, Lokono Arawak of Barbados, "strong support by a group of States including Philippines, Mexico, Costa Rica, Peru, Chile, Tuvalu, Indonesia, Canada and others, standing in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples throughout the negotiations, was required to achieve these inclusions in the final Agreement.

Despite disappointment that the phrase 'rights of Indigenous Peoples' and Human Rights in general did not also appear in the Agreement's operative section, International Chief, attorney and member of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) Wilton Littlechild, Ermineskin Cree Nation, clarified that "the preamble of a Treaty provides the context and framework for interpreting and implementing the entire document." The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties supports his assessment. On this basis, Chief Littlechild called the Paris Agreement an "incremental advancement for recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in international law."

The Paris Agreement also calls on State parties (countries) to hold "the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels." The 1.5

temperature goal was a core position not only of Indigenous Peoples, but the Small Island Developing States.

Article 7 of the Agreement addressing Adaptation affirms the need for a participatory, transparent, gender-sensitive approach based on science and “as appropriate, traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems”. UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Victoria Tauli Corpuz noted that Indigenous Peoples’ traditional knowledge, innovations and practices are recognized in both the Agreement and the Decision, and stated that moving forward “the challenge is how to operationalize this decision.”

The inclusion of Indigenous Peoples’ core positions both in the Paris Agreement and Decision was the result of the monumental, coordinated and unified efforts by the Indigenous Peoples Caucus throughout COP21. Despite the shortfalls, the inclusion of “the rights of Indigenous Peoples” in both preambles provides a basis for future advocacy to ensure that all programs addressing Climate Change are carried out with respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples as affirmed in the UN Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including land and resource rights, free prior and informed consent, traditional knowledge and Treaty rights.

END

For more information, earlier press releases, and additional resources see the website of the International Indian Treaty Council at <http://www.iitc.org/program-areas/environmental-health/climate-change-and-food-sovereignty/>.

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