

Co-leads note by FWG members and activity 1 co-leads, Dr. Pasang Dolma Sherpa, Ms. Andrea Carmen, and Mr. Clement Yow Mulalap

Version 15 November 2021

A. Summary of First Annual Gathering of Knowledge Holders written by FWG members and activity co-leads, Dr. Pasang Dolma Sherpa, Ms. Andrea Carmen, and Mr. Clement Yow Mulalap¹

On Saturday, November 6, 2021, 28 Indigenous knowledge holders and practitioners from all 7 UN-recognized Indigenous socio-cultural regions of the world gathered in a closed session during the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP 26) in Glasgow, Scotland. This activity from the LCIPP initial two-year workplan was implemented the knowledge function of the platform. Twenty-four indigenous knowledge holders participated in person, and 4 participated virtually. During this closed session for indigenous peoples, these knowledge holders—which included indigenous elders, youth, women, traditional practitioners and food producers—shared and exchanged their knowledge, teachings, understanding, wisdom, lived experiences, challenges and proposed solutions with one another in response to the causes and impacts of climate change that they are confronting in their homelands, as well as examples of on-the-ground responses for adaptation and mitigation.

The knowledge holders shared their knowledge and experiences in 4 roundtable conversations addressing key themes as follows:

1. Impacts of climate change on the livelihoods, knowledge systems and cultural practices of indigenous peoples;
2. Indigenous food systems and healing practices in the context of climate change;
3. Indigenous biodiversity stewardship in the context of climate change;
4. Perspectives from indigenous youth.

Each roundtable aimed to include the participation of knowledge holders from all seven regions, resulting in a heartfelt, inspiring, highly informative and often emotional experience for all who participated.

The second part of Activity 1 took place on November 8 from 10:00 to 13:00 when the co-leads facilitated a dialogue between the knowledge-holders and Parties as well as representatives of other constituted bodies within the UNFCCC. A preliminary summary was presented by the co-leads, reflecting the Day 1 inputs of the knowledge holders at that time.

The co-leads of Activity 1, FWG members Pasang Dolma Sherpa (Indigenous Peoples Asia region), Andrea Carmen (Indigenous Peoples North America Region) and Clement Yow Mulalap (Small Island Developing States), have compiled the following preliminary list of key messages and take-aways from the knowledge holders' closed sharing session on November 6th, as well as additional inputs based on their contributions during the dialogue with Parties 2nd Part 2. We noted that many of these messages were cross-cutting and were reiterated by knowledge holders in each of the roundtables with different perspectives reflecting distinct regional realities. In particular we highlight the consistent overarching sense of urgency expressed through the session, and the call for immediate, strong and decisive action by Parties at COP 26 to reduce and reverse the impacts of

¹ The information contained in this note is written in first person and reflects only the perspectives of the individual LCIPP Facilitative Working Group Members and co-leads of activity 1, Pasang Dolma Sherpa, Andrea Carmen, and Clement Yow Mulalap.

climate change which constitute a crisis situation in their Indigenous homelands around the world. A detailed report prepared by the co-leads and the secretariat will be disseminated to the knowledge holders before the end of 2021 for their review and inputs, to be then cleared by the FWG and published as an official UNFCCC document. The co-leads would like to express their gratitude to the Forest Peoples Program (FPP) for supporting the participation of indigenous knowledge holders joining virtually from the Asia region.

B. Summary of key messages from Part 1 and Part 2

Cross-cutting themes:

Only when our rights to our lands, forests, sea ice, and waters as well as free prior and informed consent are fully respected and upheld by all states, and our land tenure, governance systems and customary and ancestral land titles are legally recognized, will we be able to continue to protect, govern, manage and ensure the resiliency of our lands, ecosystems and original biodiversity, maintain our sustainable food systems and cultures, and pass on our traditions and practices to our new generations. Contaminated and damaged lands, air, waters and ecosystems, and those negatively impacted by imposed development activities such as damming, must be restored to their natural healthy states and returned to the jurisdiction of the indigenous peoples concerned so that they can be protected into the future.

Indigenous knowledge, values, practices and world views are collective and intergenerational, based on respect, listening, reciprocal responsibilities and oral traditions. They are the heritage we have received from our ancestors. They are time-tested, ensuring our survival in the face of many challenges over the millennia. Their value and significance cannot be adequately encompassed or reflected in books, reports by non-indigenous institutions or in peer reviewed studies by non-indigenous scientists. Indigenous peoples must have unqualified control over their knowledge with Free Prior and Informed Consent over if and how it is shared and used. Indigenous-led research based on own understandings, values, scientific knowledge, rights and realities must be respected by outside scientists, other researchers and UN bodies on an equal par and standing.

Indigenous peoples, including our knowledge holders, must be able to participate directly, with our own voices, in the UNFCCC process where our rights, cultures, lands and ways of life are being directly affected. Our knowledge and lived experiences as well as our proposals for effective solutions and adaptation strategies must be taken seriously. Our rights must be respected in the development of policies and in decision-making that affects us and the lives our future generations through meaningful participation of indigenous peoples at all levels. The UNFCCC must ensure access to adequate resources to support this participation. Existing procedures, formats, rules and agendas will need to be adjusted to accommodate the real and effective participation of indigenous knowledge holders.

Roundtable 1: Impacts of climate change on the livelihoods, knowledge systems and cultural practices of indigenous peoples

The pollution and emissions that are causing this crisis did not come from us. The governments of the world that have allowed the unbridled expansion of extractive activities such as fossil fuel production, mining, drilling, fracking and deforestation by corporations are responsible for this crisis. Our responsibility as indigenous peoples is to provide them with direction for a new way of living that respects and protects the natural world.

Our survival as indigenous peoples cannot be separated from our ancestral homelands and the health and well-being of the natural world as a whole. We are part of Nature. We are one with Nature. Indigenous peoples do not want to become beggars or refugees in our own homelands, or only found in museums and history books. We want to be able to thrive and live in abundance as our ancestors did. We have always been adaptable Peoples, but now the changes are coming very quickly. The seasons we have always known are changing, and the weather is more extreme and unpredictable. Due to the changing climate, we are seeing new animals, insects, fish, plants and birds coming into our areas. Some are invasive, push out the native species, destroy original biodiversity and forests, and carry disease. At the same time, many of those we have always depended upon are disappearing. We are experiencing droughts, flooding, forest fires, rising sea levels and melting ice, threatening the productivity and life cycles of our lands, waters and food sources. Our rivers and lakes are drying up, and we cannot drink the water anymore.

The loss and damage we have suffered from the impacts of climate change is already extreme and is both economic and non-economic and directly affects knowledge systems and ways of life. While no price can be put upon what we have already lost and all that is threatened, adequate, direct financial resources would greatly assist indigenous communities to adapt to these losses, restore what we can and protect and strengthen the resiliency of what remains.

Roundtable 2: Indigenous food systems and healing practices in the context of climate change

Our cultures and ways of knowing are ever present as the foundation for the sustainable, respectful ways that we produce our traditional foods by hunting, fishing, gathering, herding and farming. However, our millennial food production practices including pastoralism, rotational agriculture and traditional forms of hunting and fishing, are often prohibited and even criminalized, and are falsely accused of contributing to environmental degradation. In addition, the commodification, commercialization, genetic modification and exploitation of our indigenous knowledge systems and cultural heritage, including our traditional plants, animals, seeds and medicines, is increasing, undermining our ability to depend on our natural biodiversity to adapt and survive.

We call for a halt to criminalization of indigenous traditional lifeways and food system practices, based on their knowledge systems the persecution and assassination of indigenous rights defenders, as well as the forcible removal of indigenous peoples from their homelands due to the extractive practices that contribute to climate change. This includes the creation of national parks, “conserved” and “protected” areas, and 30X30 projects being carried out in the traditional territories of indigenous peoples that undermine our lifeways, violate our rights and fail to recognize our longstanding and ongoing roles as successful caretakers and protectors of the biodiversity in our traditional homelands.

Roundtable 3: Indigenous biodiversity stewardship in the context of climate change

Indigenous women are in the forefront of the impacts of climate change in their homelands, especially the losses of traditional foods and medicinal plants. Yet they are also in the forefront of leading the way to protect these vital elements to our survival and adapting to the impacts of climate change based on their role and knowledge as life givers, healers and food producers as well as water, land and human rights protectors.

Roundtable 4: Perspectives from indigenous youth

The protection, practice and revitalization needed of our indigenous languages are essential for maintaining our ways of life, ways of knowing, food systems, Indigenous identities and the

relationships and responsibilities we have the natural world. These understandings, based on the ongoing use of our Indigenous languages, must be transferred to our younger generations through formal and informal education and outreach initiatives including on climate change.

Finally, but of utmost importance, Indigenous youth must be provided with real participation and an ongoing seat at the table. They must be taken seriously and respected for their knowledge, wisdom and profound insights, and included in decision-making that affects their lives now and in the future, especially in decision-making regarding climate actions and policies on all levels. They will inherit the results and impacts of the decisions we are making today and will judge us accordingly.

C. Conclusion

In closing, as the co-leads for Activity 1, we thank all the participants in Activity 1, in particular the knowledge holders who traveled far distances and overcame many obstacles to contribute in this historic process. We invite all participants to review the other deliverables for this activity on the LCIPP portal, including the compilation of the international human rights standards that provide safeguards for the traditional knowledge indigenous peoples and cultural practices, including the affirmation of free prior and informed consent regarding the use and sharing of Indigenous knowledge in regard to climate change.

Annex 1: List of inputs from knowledge holders

Presented below is a comprehensive list of inputs from the knowledge holders that they expressed during the gathering on November 6, 2021. Each input was made by at least one knowledge holder.² The inputs below form the basis for a summary document prepared by the co-leads for Activity 1 containing key messages from the gathering on November 6, 2021 which will be used to inform the final summary report of the gathering prepared by the secretariat and reviewed by the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) of the LCIPP. These statements may only be attributed to the expert knowledge holders who participated in the annual gathering and do not reflect the views or statements made by of any other person, body, or institution, including the UNFCCC secretariat.

Roundtable 1

- 1) Mother Earth always provided and still provides us with the knowledge we need to live in abundance and to adapt to climate change in our own homelands.
- 2) Our knowledge, values, spirituality and cultural practices are intergenerational, based on customary governance system, self-respect, listening and practices, the heritage of our ancestors not books, non-indigenous universities or reports. We have to listen to what Mother Earth is telling us with what is happening today, the hurricanes, fires, floods and droughts.
- 3) Scientific reports and assessments regarding the causes, impacts, adaptation, mitigations and proposed solutions to climate change should include the knowledge and science of indigenous peoples based on time-tested millennial knowledge systems, understandings and ways of knowing most often expressed through oral transmissions and on-the-ground practices rather than written “peer reviewed” studies, and must ensure the free prior and informed consent and full participation of the indigenous peoples concerned including knowledge holders.
- 4) The pollution and emissions that are causing this crisis did not come from us. The governments of the world that allow the unbridled expansion of extractive activities by corporations are responsible for this crisis. Our responsibility as indigenous peoples is to provide them with direction for a new way. We don’t want to become vulnerable in our homelands. We want to be able to live in abundance as our ancestors did, continue our indigenous practices founded in indigenous knowledge.

² For the sake of clarity, the use of collective pronouns and similar terms (e.g., “us,” “our,” “we,” “they,” “their) in each listed input should not be taken to imply that each such input was necessarily made by more than one knowledge holder. Rather, each term represents how each knowledge holder spoke at least on behalf of a particular Indigenous collective of relation to that knowledge holder (e.g., the knowledge holder’s tribe), although that did not preclude other knowledge holders from echoing each such input.

- 5) Policy makers need to listen. Mother earth is telling us that human beings need to change their practices and their ways producing and using resources so that indigenous peoples can survive. We are in an imminent crisis, a global climate emergency by we have not acted or taken full responsibility as the human family. This is a global responsibility.
- 6) We don't want to exist only in the history books, movies, stories or old photos. We need the Parties to take strong action now, today while we are still able to survive on our homelands
- 7) We need our young people to stay engaged in our traditional knowledge and practices and to find ways to support their continued engagement.
- 8) The indigenous knowledge is of millenary history and contains science, technology, mathematics and ancestral knowledge that are still alive and will continue to live from generation to generation.
- 9) We should not share our knowledge to those who do not respect our knowledge and disvalue our livelihood or will use it to harm us. Natural laws about ways to live in balance with the earth are not being considered in national and international policies and laws. Instead of the commodification of the sacred elements of the natural world including the air, water, land, minerals, plants, seeds and animals.
- 10) Parties must understand that the survival of human being cannot be separated from the health of the Natural World: humans are an inextricable part of Nature.
- 11) The direct, full and formal participation of indigenous peoples in all discussions, processes and bodies of the UNFCCC must be ensured based on Article 18 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 12) Parties need to recognize that real climate solutions cannot exist if the rights of indigenous peoples to continue their traditional cultural and spiritual practices, including their food systems, land tenure and ways of knowing for the protection and conservations of their lands, waters, and biodiversity and ecosystems are not upheld in all discussions and development of programs addressing climate change.
- 13) Parties need to recognize the impacts of their negotiations here at COP 26, such as those related to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, and adopt new ways of thinking that respect the rights, lifeways and knowledge of indigenous peoples and the sacredness of the natural world.
- 14) We don't support market-based processes that commodify nature, put a price tag on the air, and offset development that produces greenhouse gasses and can harm indigenous peoples somewhere else. These are not real solutions to climate change.
- 15) Climate change is here. There is no more time for debate. We need for the international community to take strong action, to take responsibility, and finally fulfil the commitments the international community made in the Paris Agreement to reduce emissions and halt the rising temperature. These commitments have not been implemented and the resulting continuing temperature rise are devastating our homelands and food systems around the world.
- 16) The exclusion of indigenous peoples in governance and management has significantly contributed to exposure to the climate crisis. Thus, Parties must embark on transition to clean energy by seriously aligning with Paris climate agreements by resourcing that transition. If this is not taken seriously, developing countries especially in Africa will revert back to burning their crude deposit furthering climate repercussions.
- 17) Many international audits of corporations from different countries are engaged in prospecting and extraction of mineral resources on the lands of indigenous peoples of the world, there is a need for indigenous leadership to advise this auditing process to ensure indigenous knowledge on biodiversity is considered in decision-making.

- 18) Indigenous communities, especially indigenous women and indigenous persons with disabilities, are facing doubling food and water insecurity across many regions, disrupting sustainable traditional ways of life and food systems which are informed by indigenous knowledge.
- 19) To manage the climate emergency, indigenous knowledge and rights safeguards must be integrated into Parties' climate policies, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).
- 20) The customary institutions and self-governance systems of indigenous peoples should be recognized as the basis and foundation for the protection of indigenous knowledge, cultural values, skills that contributed for sustainable management of natural resources, ecosystem, ultimately contributing for climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- 21) The Platform [LCIPP] should continue to prioritize opportunities the exchange of knowledge and good practices among the Indigenous knowledge holders and promote respect for the knowledge systems and the practices of indigenous peoples maintained over millennia as essential for Parties and the UN system to address and respond to climate change. Furthermore, the platform should encourage indigenous knowledge systems to be mainstreamed to indigenous youth and involve them in decision-making related to climate change.

Roundtable 2

- 22) We need to rely on our Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing and listening to nature to integrate new teachings, understandings and methods, to plant and gather in new places, and use seeds that we trade with other indigenous peoples to adapt to the new climates we are experiencing.
- 23) Indigenous women are in the forefront of the impacts, especially to the loss of traditional food and medicinal plants, but are also in the forefront of leading the way to protect and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- 24) When we are able to live in and steward our own territories, we can take care of lands, pass on our tradition knowledge, skills and cultural values to our new generations. Our cultures are ever present in the ways we live, hunt fish, gather, farm and herd, the ways we take care of our lands and the ways we manage our land.
- 25) We need to listen to the knowledge and practices we have received from our ancestors, and revive and restore them as needed. We have always been adaptable peoples, but now the changes are coming very quickly. Our seasons are changing. The weather is more extreme. We have new animals and birds coming into our lands and drought, floods, forest drying and fires, rising sea levels and melting ice threatens the productivity and life cycles of our lands, waters and food sources. Our rivers and lakes are drying up. We can't drink the water anymore.
- 26) Our human existence depends on the kindness and generosity of our oceans, air, lands and waters. We need to support the food production methods of our Peoples, including pastoralism, herding fishing and small-scale farming, and address the threats to their resiliency. We want our grandchildren to be able to see the forests in their natural beauty, drink the water and eat our own traditional foods, just as our ancestors did.
- 27) The imposition of genetically modified hybrid seeds and high pesticides agriculture undermines our original, ancestral food biodiversity and therefore our ability to adapt our food systems to the adverse climate impacts.

- 28) The food practices of indigenous peoples have key lessons for the world: take only what you need, use what you take, and share what you have.
- 29) Our traditional indigenous knowledge has been ignored, and through this we see the erosion of our knowledge systems upon which our food systems are based and unable to adapt to the rate that the climate is changing.
- 30) The commodification, commercialization and exploitation of our Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural heritage, including our traditional foods, seeds, waters, plants, animals and medicines are increasing, undermining our ability to depend on our natural diversity to adapt and survive. This must stop and the rights of indigenous peoples to control and protect this knowledge as affirmed in Article 31 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples must be respected.
- 31) Indigenous peoples must have unqualified control over their knowledge with Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) over if and how it is shared and used.
- 32) The imposition by Parties of the creation or demarcation of forested and other lands termed as forest reserves, conservation areas, and protected areas, whether named as national parks, eco parks, sanctuaries, community conserved areas or otherwise, including under national programs being carried out to address climate change and meet the NDCs of Parties, must not negatively affect our ways of life and methods or fail to recognize our role as stewards of biodiversity on our lands. Our ability to protect our own territories, biodiversity, and food systems through the creation of indigenous protected traditional use areas must be legally recognized, and adequately funded.

Roundtable 3

- 33) If we don't protect and take care of the sacred gift of our environment, everything that gives us our lives will disappear.
- 34) The protection of indigenous peoples is the protection of Nature and the world's remaining biodiversity.
- 35) We know that there are many ways to protect our fragile ecosystems and some of those we can share, if the outside world is willing to listen.
- 36) The protection, practice and restoration of our Indigenous languages are essential for maintaining our ways of life, taking care of our ecosystems, continuing our taking care of our ecosystems, continuing our ways of knowing, food systems, Indigenous identities and the relationships and responsibilities we have the natural world. This needs to be recognized and affirmed in the upcoming UN International Decade of Indigenous Languages.
- 37) We must continue to participate, to speak for ourselves before the world community, to make our voices heard in the COP 26 process where our cultures, lands and ways of life are being affected.
- 38) Our homelands and natural environments are foundational to our identities as indigenous peoples, we see the impacts of climate change and the destruction of the homelands and natural environments as a direct threat to our livelihoods because without the natural world, which our knowledge is based in, we cannot survive.
- 39) We remain concerned of the persecution of Indigenous knowledge holders on Indigenous lands, and we reject the exploitation of our sacred natural world. We need to act jointly and with a common voice, to preserve our knowledge to defend those being harmed and persecuted for protecting nature.

- 40) Transnationalism and the sharing of knowledge and resources among our Peoples and Nations will help us to continue to adapt to the changes we already see coming. Exchanging, sharing and repatriating/rematriating seeds, methods, ways to work with plants, animals and fish that are new to our territories will support our resiliency. Exchanging, sharing and repatriating/rematriation seeds, methods, ways to work with plants, animals and fish that are new to our areas will support our resiliency.
- 41) The role of indigenous peoples as knowledge holders must be recognized, respected and integrated into national policies impacting our lands and international actions to address climate change. Our voices must be heard for the sake of our collective survival. State and country laws need to be assessed and redrafted to ensure that such laws do not infringe on indigenous peoples access to the land, water and food resources required for their adaptation.
- 42) The loss and damage we have suffered in our homelands is already extreme and is both economic and non-economic. While no price can be put upon what we have already lost and all that is threatened, financial resources will help many of our communities to adapt to these losses, restore what we can and protect and strengthen the resiliency of what remains.
- 43) Parties must live up to their interrelated commitments under Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the preamble of the Paris Agreement, and paragraph 135 of UNFCCC decision 1/CP.21.
- 44) For indigenous peoples to continue to steward nature, Parties must embark on transition to clean energy by seriously aligning with Paris climate agreements by resourcing that transition. If this is not taken seriously, developing countries especially in Africa will revert back to burning their crude deposit furthering climate repercussions, whose climate impacts will directly impact indigenous lands and bio-cultural diversity.

Roundtable 4

- 45) We need to create parallel educational systems to ensure that Indigenous knowledge continues to be understood and practiced by our Peoples and coming generations both through formal and informal education systems.
- 46) Indigenous youth need to be provided real participation and an ongoing seat at the table to be taken seriously, respected for their knowledge and be included in decision-making that affects their lives now and, in the future, including decision-making regarding climate actions and policies on all levels.
- 47) We need to support the mental health of Indigenous youth who are suffering in this time of crisis reflected in high rates of youth suicide in many Indigenous communities. We affirm the link between traditional food production, working and living on our lands and waters, and maintaining mental and spiritual health and healing.
- 48) We need to revive and continue the rights of passage, cultural practices, spiritual traditions, and ceremonies that are carried out on the land for our children and youth to continue to strengthen new generations and their spiritual connections to their lands and practices. Moreover, we need to create our own platforms that encourage youth involvements in

cultural activities to emphasize importance of the indigenous knowledges system and call LCIPP to continue to support this.

- 49) We need to restore and strengthen the thriving economies in our homelands, based on traditional methods and principles of sharing, trade and barter, and reciprocity rather than greed, consumerism and over-consumption.
- 50) We need to challenge the agendas we are asked to be part of here at COP 26, that may not reflect our world views or present real solutions. We can be pro-active here with our own solutions based on our own knowledge systems.
- 51) We finally commit to rebuild the health of our families and communities, decolonize our minds and ways of life, work for the return, access to and protection of our ancestral lands and waters, restore and strengthen the use of our indigenous languages, and heal ourselves with the ceremonies left to us by those that went before. These are also true climate solutions.

Annex 2: Group photographs

- A. Photo from Gathering Part 1: Knowledge holders' internal dialogue



B. Photos from Gathering Part 2: Dialogue with Parties and constituted bodies

