

Summary Report COP 28 LCIPP Annual Youth Round Table Dialogue

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I. Background and Overview of the Roundtable Dialogue

Background

On 02 December 2023 and 06 December 2023, Indigenous youth and knowledge holders from all seven UN Indigenous sociocultural regions gathered during the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) in Dubai, UAE, under Activity 8 of the second, three-year workplan of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP), for the LCIPP Annual Youth Round Table at COP 28. Activity 8 relates to hosting an annual round table, in collaboration with Indigenous youth and youth from local communities, as well as with broad and gender-balanced youth representation from each of the United Nations Indigenous sociocultural regions, to explore gender-responsive ways and means to strengthen the engagement of youth, and participation in intergenerational knowledge-sharing and continuing/strengthening practices on the ground, as well to contribute to climate policies and actions at the national and international level.¹ The outcomes focus on the development of concrete ways to advance the engagement of youth in designing and implementing climate policies and actions at all levels, including the UNFCCC process.

The design of the annual youth round table was based on input gathered during two Informal Virtual Youth Consultations. To enable wider participation from different time zones, two sessions at different times with interpretation in different languages were organized: the first session was conducted in English and Spanish, and the second session was conducted in English, French and Russian. The session began with an overview of the LCIPP and Activity 8 and transitioned into an open discussion focused on the design of the annual round table at COP 28, actions to support full participation of Indigenous youth, and prospective topics to be discussed. A full summary of the informal consultations can be found on the LCIPP Resource Hub.²

Overview

During the round table at COP 28, Indigenous youth and youth from local communities shared and exchanged their knowledge, teachings, understandings, and solutions to the causes and impacts of climate that they are confronting in their homelands.

It was designed to feature two sessions:

- Part I: Exchange amongst Indigenous youth and youth from local communities: More than 100 Indigenous youth and youth from local communities attended, serving as a meeting to discuss ways: i) to support enhancing meaningful participation of Indigenous youth and youth from local communities in climate policies and action, ii) to share examples of climate change adaptation and mitigation in their regions; ; iii) and to discuss opportunities to contribute to the activities of the FWG through the entirety of the workplan, including about how and what information and recommendations will be shared in part II.
- Part II: Dialogue with Parties: The second part of the gathering featured participation by Indigenous youth from each of the UN Indigenous sociocultural regions, local communities, Party representatives, international organizations, constituted bodies under the Convention, and scientific bodies. In this segment, the Indigenous youth presented observations and recommendations, and

¹Second three-year workplan of the LCIPP (2022 – 2024), see <https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2022-05/LCIPP%20second%20three%20year%20workplan.pdf>

² <https://lcipp.unfccc.int/information-hub/information-record-detail?source=896&typeresource=918&id=584>

proposals for integrating their knowledge into climate action and policies. The session was co-moderated by Onel Inanadinia Masardule, Skwakwas Dunstan-Moore, Viktor Sulyandziga Bagat, selected by Indigenous youth from all seven UN Indigenous sociocultural regions. In response Party representatives, including Colombia, New Zealand and Tanzania highlighted the need for engagement of Indigenous youth and youth from local communities in designing and implementing climate policies and actions at all levels.

This summary document focuses on the outcomes of Part I, and the response from Parties and constituted bodies in Part II.

II. Challenges and Recommendations

Indigenous youth and youth from local communities engaged in small group discussions and reflected on processes / mechanisms that can be supported (or created) for sustained engagement and inclusion of solutions from Indigenous youth and youth from local communities in areas of work under the UNFCCC, including through the work of the FWG of the LCIPP.

| Challenges | Recommendations |
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| <p>1. Lack of resources & funding: Indigenous youth face significant challenges due to insufficient funding for year-round opportunities that would allow them to engage in climate action and other initiatives. Many Indigenous Peoples reside in remote areas without access to basic infrastructure, such as electricity, which further complicates the ability to share and transfer traditional knowledge. Additionally, limited resources and capacity restrict their ability to fully participate in crucial climate action processes.</p> <p>2. Communication barriers: A recurring challenge is the inadequate communication of ongoing work back to Indigenous communities, making it difficult to keep everyone informed. Transferring information clearly and accessibly to communities on the ground presents another obstacle. The issue is compounded by language barriers, particularly in regions where multiple languages—such as Spanish, Portuguese, and English—are spoken. This multilingual environment makes effective dialogue difficult, resulting in poor communication flow and restricted access to vital information.</p> | <p>1. Creation of additional platforms: To ensure the ongoing success and impact of Indigenous youth initiatives, it was recommended to sustain efforts all year round, in addition to the interaction during the sessions of the Conference of Parties. The participants suggested below ideas for the same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. hosting gatherings in each other's homelands ii. creating a youth pavilion that would provide a dedicated space for Indigenous youths to engage and showcase their initiatives iii. launching a regional youth action platform with in-person training sessions to further support the development and mobilization of youth in climate action iv. developing a regional hub for training to foster connections between Indigenous youth and policymakers, enabling more effective climate action and advocacy. This hub could serve as a central resource for training and facilitating policy connections, ensuring that Indigenous youth have the support and knowledge needed to influence climate policies and processes. v. holding preparatory meetings ahead of sessions of COP <p>2. Learning, mentorship, and capacity building: A robust learning environment tailored for youth should be established to foster their development and leadership skills. Intergenerational exchange of Indigenous knowledge is crucial for preserving and advancing traditional wisdom. Providing mentorship through community and expert dialogues could guide and support youth in their climate initiatives. Enhancing capacity building efforts and developing structures to support Indigenous youth in climate processes are essential. To further build capacity, it was recommended that</p> |

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| <p>3. Cultural disconnection: The participants expressed the need for further respect to cultural protocols at various events, which would help facilitate safe space for Indigenous participants. Many Indigenous youth also highlighted lack of mentorship which leaves them without the necessary guidance to fully engage and contribute in meaningful ways.</p> <p>4. Complexity of global discussions: The highly technical nature of global climate discussions poses another barrier for Indigenous Peoples. The complexity of these conversations makes it difficult for Indigenous youth and youth from local communities to engage effectively and contribute to the decision-making process, as they often lack the background and resources needed to navigate these discussions.</p> | <p>appointing an alternate youth member in the Facilitative Working Group will further respect and integrate cultural perspectives.</p> <p>3. Funding and resource allocation: Securing additional funding is critical to strengthening youth participation and supporting Indigenous-led initiatives. Ensuring targeted funding for climate action processes will enable effective and sustained engagement by Indigenous youths. Adequate financial resources are necessary to implement and maintain the recommended programs and initiatives.</p> <p>4. Communication, engagement, and cultural respect Creating dedicated spaces for Indigenous youth to share feedback and knowledge will facilitate better communication and engagement. Implementing a system to track youth engagement progress and simplifying group discussion questions will enhance understanding and involvement. Establishing a system for following up with communities, including additional documentation, will ensure ongoing support and respect for cultural practices. Proposing youth engagement in future regional gatherings and discussions is instrumental for continued representation and input.</p> |
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These challenges and recommendations were considered by the FWG in drafting the [report of the FWG of the LCIPP](#), published on 22 March 2024.

Additionally, the participants reflected on how the leadership of Indigenous youth and youth from local communities can be enhanced in climate policy development and implementation at all levels.

Indigenous youth and youth from local communities highlighted several challenges, including the disconnection they face from their traditional lands as they leave in search of better education and career opportunities. Their rights are not adequately recognized due to a lack of participation in decision-making processes. Communities also suffer from inadequate resources, including water, agricultural support, and energy infrastructure. Additionally, there is insufficient focus on developing sustainable energy solutions in Indigenous regions. Capacity-building efforts at the local community level are lacking, further limiting their ability to engage in meaningful climate action.

The participants also discussed some recommendations to address these challenges. They highlighted that Indigenous Peoples should be empowered to define their own protection measures and integrate traditional knowledge into education systems and policies. Efforts must focus on enhancing education, communication skills, and securing increased funding for education while supporting intergenerational knowledge exchange. Investment in youth-led climate initiatives is vital, along with promoting their active participation in environmental protection and self-help activities. Establishing safe spaces for youth, securing funding for initiatives, and improving local capacity-building and mentorship opportunities are crucial. Strengthening cultural connections, fostering self-determination, and developing education systems that reflect Indigenous lifestyles and promote sustainable economies are key priorities. Moreover, it is essential to ensure Indigenous youth are included in decision-making processes and climate action efforts while expanding community involvement and raising awareness.

III. Case Stories

This section summarizes case stories and testimonials on solutions from their regions, shared by Indigenous youth during the LCIPP Annual Youth Round Table.

Brittany Supernault, from East Prairie Métis Settlement in what is now Alberta, Canada, reflected on the impacts of climate change, but also highlighted on the solutions the youth have learnt from their Elders and how they are implementing it:

This past spring, an uncontrollable wildfire devastated my home community, East Prairie Métis Settlement on Treaty Eight, burning for weeks due to climate change-induced dry conditions. Despite the severity, we received little help from provincial and federal governments because our community, being Indigenous and remote, was deemed expendable. The fire destroyed 40 homes, including those of my family, and displaced 14 families. Beyond the material loss, our forest—vital for our hunting, medicine, and ceremonies—was also lost, impacting our cultural practices. My 99-year-old kokum shared that after fires come floods, worsening the damage due to compromised soil and tree loss. However, she also provided a solution: by planting trees, we can help the forest heal and restore our traditional lands for future generations. In response, I am planning a youth tree-planting initiative to reforest our land, which will not only aid in soil and water recovery but also bring back wildlife and preserve our cultural heritage. While the men in our community focus on prevention, my kokum and I emphasize healing, ensuring that our youth can continue our traditions and protect the environment. It is crucial that those in power support youth-led initiatives like ours, as our work is vital for both our community and the broader fight against climate change.

-Brittney Supernault

Chyongyung Murong from Bangladesh, and representing the voices of Indigenous Peoples in Asia, shared how they are deeply impacted by climate change.

In our communities, men must spend hours fetching water, and our traditional livelihoods, such as shifting cultivation, are disappearing due to the effects of climate change, including flooding, waterlogging, thunderstorms, and landslides. Deforestation, driven by development projects, tourism, and the establishment of national parks, is further eroding our lands and resources. As we strive to protect our territories, we often face opposition from armed forces and non-Indigenous communities, making it difficult to safeguard our rights and preserve our way of life. Despite the challenges, including the loss of agricultural land and food insecurity, our efforts to share information and advocate for our motherland continue to be met with significant obstacles.

-Chyongyung Murong

Jean-Mary Tjiohima from the San People, a hunter gatherer community of South Africa highlighted the direct and indirect impacts of climate change.

Our areas are mostly affected by drought, leading to food security issues and limited access to education. Additionally, our territories are increasingly threatened by extractive industries, such as mining, which encroach upon Indigenous lands and displace communities without adequate protection. Additionally, climate mitigation efforts often target areas inhabited by Indigenous Peoples for conservation, further restricting their traditional practices and cultural expressions. In places like Botswana, many people cannot hunt or engage in cultural practices because these areas are designated

as conservation zones, with harsh penalties for those who engage in such practices, thereby impeding their ability to maintain their way of life.

- **Jean-Mary Tjiohimba**

Oumou Dicko, Indigenous youth from Mali shared challenges due to climate change in their community.

As Indigenous youth, we face severe challenges due to climate change, including food insecurity and poor harvests that weaken our livestock, leading to conflicts over resources and displacement. We endure discrimination and violence, often being labeled as terrorists due to our struggles. Deforestation and droughts add to our stress, and climate change even forces some schools to close, as children are needed for domestic work. We urgently need support to strengthen and restore our livelihoods and address these vulnerabilities.

- **Oumou Dicko**

Susanna Enni Kristiina Simila, Saami youth expressed solidarity and support to everyone who has shared their experiences and provided perspectives on impacts of climate change from Saami youth perspectives.

We gather at the world's largest climate conference to work together for the planet's future, yet political processes here often result in human rights violations. Heavy forestry and large-scale development projects disrupt our traditional livelihoods, which are deeply connected to nature. The so-called green transition often harms us, as massive wind industries and other projects encroach upon our cultural and livelihood areas, challenging our ability to sustain ourselves and maintain environmental balance.

Yesterday, I highlighted ongoing human rights violations in Norway, where wind farms have been built on Sami reindeer herding lands without consent. Similarly, large-scale logging in Finland and Sweden threatens our remaining old forests. We must address the issue of the green transition turning into a form of colonialism. Many well-intentioned environmental initiatives perpetuate historical injustices against Indigenous Peoples by imposing conservation measures without proper consultation, displacing us from our ancestral lands. Climate justice requires a shift towards solutions that respect and empower Indigenous autonomy rather than imposing external environmental protections. Sami youth face an uncertain future as we engage in dialogues and protests against these injustices. We should not have to choose between preserving our traditional livelihoods and remaining on our ancestral lands. Our connection to the land is fundamental to our existence, and losing it means losing our identity.

In conclusion, Sami youth are not just the future; we are the present. We must implement the basics of sustainability without replacing one form of degradation with another or violating our rights. We need open, inclusive dialogues that respect Indigenous perspectives and ensure our lands and ecosystems are not sacrificed for so-called progress. We must strive for a world where Indigenous Peoples are engaged and respected in climate action. Our actions today will shape the legacy for future generations. Let us work towards a world where climate justice is a lived reality.

-**Susanna Enni Kristiina Simila**

Ruth Suwaksiork Kaviok, Inuit youth from Nunavut, Northern Canada shared the following impacts of climate change on their community.

As Inuit youth, we face significant challenges in education, mental health, and preserving our culture and unity. Extreme weather events, like 110 km/h winds and unexpected blizzards, are disrupting our traditional way of life and cultural practices, as shared by our elder Alissa Kublut. Climate change is having a profound impact on our environment and way of life.

- **Ruth Suwaksiork Kaviok**

Sergio Ramiro Batzin Noj from the Maya Kaqchikel Peoples of Guatemala shared the vision and ideas from his community.

In my community, there is a network of centers of distinction focused on Indigenous knowledge and local communities. This network is composed of Indigenous leaders, experts, professionals, and advocates of Indigenous knowledge. Among these centers of distinction is the observatory of a Maya Kaqchikel located in Chimaltenango, Guatemala. The synergies between Indigenous knowledge and scientific knowledge aim to balance the validity of these types of knowledge.

An experimental method of socialization is implemented along the Kaqchikel volcanic chain at a national level, serving as a traditional model to prevent and reduce the risks of socio-natural disasters and to improve the response capacity of communities through their own organizations. Currently, the observatory of time and space is driven by a ceremonial center where spiritual guides consult energies about the ancestors. This can include information about the climate or various energies that we connect with Mother Nature.

Additionally, we have a meteorological station, which is the technological component we are implementing to work in harmony with traditional knowledge and new technologies. We also need to integrate with the existing knowledge. The meteorological station allows us to observe and measure precipitation, temperature, humidity, wind direction, and speed. This provides us with greater knowledge when interpreting certain climatic factors or signals given to us by the ancestors, as we say in my community.

I will also talk a bit about the forestry calendar. In my community, it is a system for managing and conserving forests that adapts to mitigate the impacts of climate change. The calendar involves selecting native seeds, and the ancestors have taught us to recognize whether a seed is feminine or masculine. This respect or gender focus, known as duality, is part of the Maya worldview.

-Sergio Ramiro Batzin Noj

Taily de Faria Marcos Terena from the Terena Nation from the Chaco region, the Pantanal of Brazil shared perspectives from Terena youth.

We live in the flooded lands that are vital to the water cycle, but these lands are now suffering from severe droughts and large criminal fires, caused by agribusiness expansion. As youth, we have formed brigades to prevent these fires from reaching our homes, but the problem extends beyond our control.

We, the Terena youth, are searching for ways to restore our water sources and reclaim our traditional lands. Our elders taught us the importance of living in harmony with the Earth, but modern challenges, like waste from industrialized foods, have disrupted our traditional systems. We are discussing how to educate ourselves about climate change and waste management to protect our territories from further contamination.

Despite our efforts, we often face exclusion from decision-making processes, like the national council for youth and climate in Brazil, where Indigenous voices are marginalized. To preserve our heritage, we are recording the stories of our elders, documenting how our territories have changed due to agribusiness. We have also begun reclaiming our sacred lands, and we see nature returning as a sign of hope.

The land is healing, and animals are coming back, giving us hope that we can restore our traditional way of life. We, the Terena youth, are committed to living in harmony with nature and continuing these efforts to protect our territory. Thank you.

-Taily de Faria Marcos Terrena

Gabriel Cuantiquesta Indigenous Peoples of Pastosof Colombia, part of the Network of Indigenous Youth of Latin America and the Caribbean, serving as the focal point of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus shared important insight into the need to bring Indigenous youth perspectives to the forefront.

It is essential that we bring the voices of our territories, the voices of the youth, who have been actively confronting climate change. We consider Indigenous youth crucial in this struggle because they will continue the fight that our Indigenous peoples have been waging for millennia. For millennia, we have known that collectivity is an ancestral practice that defines us, and I believe that as youth, we have also been practicing it. It is fundamentally important for us to be in these spaces.

We also have the task of taking all these discussions we have and replicating and sharing them in our communities. This is how we strengthen all these processes. From the Network of Indigenous Youth of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, recognized by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues since 2008, we would like to extend an invitation. In January, we will launch a diploma program. This program has been coordinated with the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Aviala Forum, and the World Bank.

The diploma program focuses on strengthening the leadership of Indigenous youth, and we warmly invite you to enroll and apply. It will be an interesting experience where you can enhance your leadership capacities in the face of the realities of the triple planetary crisis.

-Gabriel Cuatinquesta