

Draft Summary Report

Third Annual Gathering of Knowledge Holders

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I. Background and Overview of the Roundtable Dialogue

In conjunction with the 28th session of the Conference of Parties (COP 28), the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) hosted the third annual gathering of knowledge holders as part of the Activity 1 of the second three-year workplan of the LCIPP ¹. The workplan activity relates to “*organiz[ing] annual meetings in conjunction with the sessions of the COP, with the participation of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous knowledge holders, to expand and enhance inclusion of traditional knowledge, knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local knowledge systems in addressing and responding to climate change, consistently with rights-based international safeguards and Indigenous Peoples’ cultural protocols*”. This activity is a continuation from the initial two-year LCIPP Workplan (2020-2021). The third annual gathering of knowledge holders was organized in two parts.

On 01 December 2023, the first part of the gathering brought together over 100 Indigenous knowledge holders and practitioners including 35 regionally nominated knowledge holders by FWG Indigenous Peoples representatives from all seven UN-socio-cultural regions gathered in Dubai, UAE to discuss the interconnection between Water, Energy and Food and climate change. Knowledge holders engaged in four roundtables :

- Round table 1: Water - lifeblood of our planet
- Round table 2: Enabling energy transition strategies that intertwine environmental, social, economic and cultural benefits
- Round table 3: Seeds of Reciprocity: Indigenous approach to nourishing lands and people
- Round table 4: Weaving the Threads of life: Indigenous youth insights into the interconnection between Water-Energy-Food

During the gathering, knowledge holders – which included Elders, youth, men, women, and traditional practitioners – shared and exchanged their knowledge, teachings, understandings, and solutions highlighting their interconnectedness to water and land and the emphasized on the need to community and nature centric solutions. Following a similar format to the inaugural knowledge holders gathering in 2021, each roundtable included opening comments from identified knowledge holders from all seven regions, selected in collaboration with FWG representatives, and then opened the floor to contributions from other Indigenous knowledge holders around the room. The spirit of the discussion was powerful, as each speaker shared their reflections, experiences, and emotions with everyone in the room.

On 05 December 2023, at the second part of the gathering, knowledge holders presented their key messages and recommendations to representatives from Parties, international organizations, constituted bodies under

¹ See Decision 16/CP.26

the Convention, and scientific bodies. Several Parties and other representatives presented their reflections on the rich and holistic outcomes from the first part of the gathering.

The following sections in the report consists of a summary of key messages under each of the roundtable during Part I followed by summary of interventions from the Parties during part II of the dialogue

II. Key messages and Recommendations

Overarching Messages

I want to leave hope for my great grandchildren.

We have many words to describe snow, but in English there is just one. As we lose that sea ice, it has a global impact, as the ocean connects us all. Water is not only a resource to drink, but also an emotional experience, intimately tied to our lives. The elements of food, water, and shelter are not only for humans, but for all. As water dances and interacts with the environment we get snow. Without this interconnectivity with nature we lose that. It's vitally important to understand it's not simply a thing to drink but a spiritual connection. Humans are a component of nature and water is critical to that dance with nature.

- *Indigenous knowledge holder, Arctic Region*

The four elements were free, and now they've been prostituted. Everything now has money in it.

- *Indigenous knowledge holder, NA Region*

"In the morning, when we talked about water, we highlighted the interrelation of all water sources; the underground waters nourish the plants. Similarly, we are nourished by these plants, indicating a reciprocal support system. This is why our parents and ancestors have told us that we are brothers with all of nature, created by our creator. However, we are losing this connection due to invasions in our territories and colonization, which has led to the loss of much knowledge among our Indigenous population. Therefore, our struggle is to reclaim this knowledge that is being lost, including knowledge about plants and cultivation

- *Indigenous knowledge holder, LAC Region*

The Indigenous Knowledge Holders communicated several overarching recommendations, and then specific recommendations for each roundtable.

- Ethical Protocol for the Protection and Use of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge
- Indigenous Peoples are the solution. Our knowledge systems are vital to address climate change.
- We need mechanisms of support, including legal support, for Indigenous knowledge holders to engage in these discussions.

- We must be good care takers and not the bad landlords any longer.

Round table 1: Water - lifeblood of our planet

The first roundtable was focused on water, asking Knowledge Keepers to respond to two general questions: i) Could you describe your relationship with water, and provide practices, concrete actions or solutions of your Peoples; ii) What recommendations or concrete actions do you propose to address water-climate challenges? Based on these questions, the following key messages emerged:

- 1. Indigenous Peoples hold deep, spiritual relationships with the water that connect us to our ancestors and territories.**

My ancestors are all around here with yours. It brings tears from my eyes and goes to my spirit. It's very close to me. They ask, what is the relationship with water? We are water and water is me.

Indigenous Peoples' relation to water is beyond physical dependence, it is a manifestation of our ancestors, we have a familial responsibility to the waters as they have cared for us since time immemorial.

Indigenous knowledge holders described the deep spiritual relationships that they have with water, connecting them to their ancestors and territories. They recognized how our body is a vessel for water, a lifeform that is present in everything on this planet. For the knowledge holders, Water is sacred, giving human's life and keeping the ecosystem alive, water earth, water mountain.

- 2. Indigenous Peoples connection to water, in all forms (such as ice), is practiced through culture, spirituality, and traditional governance. It is critical for our survival, for our relationships with our more-than-human relatives, and for our sustenance.**

Water is related to two critical areas in the invocation of the creator, rain and peace build our resilience as pastoralists. As Indigenous Peoples of Kenya we depend on water to sustain us and for our livelihoods, our livestock, food security, wildlife and cultural practices, and strengthen our spiritual belief. Cultural and ecological importance in our life.

Indigenous knowledge holders shared diverse examples of how their culture, spirituality, and traditional governance is based on an intimate relationship with water. They discussed its' role in their very survival, no matter what form, and its' relationship with the more-than-human relatives and for sustenance. These relationships manifest seasonally and can play important roles in transportation and climate solutions.

- 3. Access and relationships to water has been heavily impacted by colonization, capitalism, and commodification.**

“We are in a suicidal path, we’ve never had so much greed. I cannot nourish on the fish from the lakes because they are poisoned”

“Colonial land practices divert our waters and make our traditional waters inaccessible, creating pollution and salinization of fresh water, floods, and wildfires.”

“We are now insecurely dependent on bottled water, with water insecurity causing food insecurity.”

Indigenous knowledge holders describe how water is not a commodity. It never had a monetary value because it was essential for life. Instead, they described the imposition of a western system has placed monetary value on each element, including water. The result of this is that it commodifies a resource that we depend on to survive, and creates a disconnect to nature, life, and our life force. This imbalance was directly caused by the industrial revolution, by overtourism, and now is further impacted by the thawing of our lands over recent years releasing huge amounts of methane. Indigenous knowledge holders were concerned that there would not be enough water for drinking, and for the more-than-human relatives.

- 4. Indigenous Peoples rights to water, including their free, prior, and informed consent, must be centered in all discussions on water, and any associated projects from design to implementation.**

Free prior and informed consent is critical for the implementation of projects related to or impacting waterways, water access or water quality, in all its forms, water, snow and ice.

We have sovereign rights, but there has been an erosion of Indigenous voices at the table. We need to ensure we are always at the table.

The concept of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) was communicated as a key element of these rights protections in all discussions on water, and any proposed projects being advanced in the Lands, Waters, and Territories of Indigenous Peoples

- 5. Indigenous Peoples’ access to water is directly correlated to their access to their traditional lands. Indigenous Peoples need recognition of their ancestral lands and waters, as well as financial resources to support Indigenous-led revitalization efforts.**

As Indigenous Peoples, we have been murdered for defending our water. How can we talk about water without referring to the territorial situation, exploitation, advancement of industries in our lands and territories, how are we going to continue preserving and taking care if we have these negative aspects. How can we preserve and take care of this liquid gold? We have to speak up. We have always been part of the solutions, we are still trying to speak up and give the knowledge we

have learnt from our Elders. We have used purification in a natural way. We need to prioritize the wellbeing of the world and you need to help us.

We need to restore our traditional water resources for good health. We need funding and access to our traditional lands. We have lived in harmony with our environment.

Indigenous knowledge holders were clear that our land tenure needs to be recognized, as rights to water and land tenure are interconnected. The lack of recognition of our governance and traditional customary practices is driving negative impacts on our lands and territories. For example, there are practices of land-grabbing and the impact of tourism in the Himalayas pollutes our sacred spring waters from outsiders. This, combined with the growing impact of climate change, is causing Indigenous Peoples to be double and triple victimized. In the Pacific, for example, land tenure and lack of water is causing massive migrations from the outer islands into main islands. This is exacerbated by the commodification of water, which can be seen in the Fiji Water being sold around the globe without the consent of Indigenous Peoples.

6. Indigenous Peoples require direct access to the funds, including the proposed Loss and Damage fund, to lessen impacts of climate change on Indigenous Peoples' access to, and relationship with, water.

Indigenous knowledge holders were clear that they required equitable access to Loss and Damage funds, to use them in community-led ways. They shared examples of restoration and revitalization with water systems, grounded in traditional practices since time immemorial.

7. Indigenous Peoples need to participate at the table, as rights-holders, in all discussions on water.

If we cannot meet in the middle, we cannot have this conversation. These elements used to be free, and now they have been prostituted.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) affirms the minimum standards afforded to Indigenous Peoples, reaffirming their rights to all aspects of being. These rights differentiate Indigenous Peoples from other civil society or stakeholder groups as Nations and must be reflected in climate and water policy moving forward.

Round table 2: Enabling energy transition strategies that intertwine environmental, social, economic and cultural benefits

The second roundtable was focused on energy, asking Knowledge Keepers to respond to three general questions: i) Could you share some examples, good practices or stories where you implemented energy projects in your territories? ii) How can Indigenous values inform the ethical and equitable generation and distribution of energy? describe your relationship with water, and provide practices, concrete actions or

solutions of your Peoples; iii) What recommendations or concrete actions do you propose for the global community? Based on these questions, the following key messages on the importance of centering Indigenous perspectives and rights in discussions and actions related to energy transition and environmental sustainability emerged.

- 1. Discussions on energy transition must begin with the acknowledgment of the historical and contemporary injustices faced by Indigenous Peoples due to energy development. Indigenous Peoples have been displaced, poisoned, and underserved by these industries and by governments, including in mining for petroleum, coal, gas, and materials for renewable energy technologies.**

“We are fighting for humanity and life. Just Transition needs to be done now. Humanity’s violent assaults on Mother Earth cannot continue. We need to remind humanity of our love for Mother Earth. We need to heal ourselves from our addiction to fossil fuels. It is a time of healing, and we have to work together to build new economies and protect solutions.”

Indigenous Peoples have faced significant impacts from resource extraction, displacing them from their lands and waters, impeding their ability to practice their culture and spirituality, and poisoned their natural environment. This is exacerbated by the practices of governments who are committed to energy development grounded in the disrespect of the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Examples, such as coal, mining, deforestation, and general energy access, were highlighted by Indigenous knowledge holders. They also called for the phase-out of fossil fuels, the defense of sacred lands against further development, and the avoidance of false solutions. All proposed solutions must be evaluated based on the cumulative impacts against Indigenous Peoples.

- 2. Indigenous knowledge systems, community and land tenure rights, and access to technical and human resources are essential to support Indigenous Peoples to advancing climate solutions that address environmental degradation.**

“The Indigenous value we can use for the generation and distribution of energy is respecting one another. The value of reciprocity is used in the project implementation and informs how we look after the environment. It helped us to be connected and responsible to nature.”

Indigenous knowledge holders spoke about their cultural practices that have enabled them to live sustainably with the natural world. Solutions that preserve biodiversity, preserve cultural identity, and support community involvement were identified as vital to supporting the continuation of these practices. Knowledge holders also spoke about the need to connect to one another, both in a physical and spiritual sense, which would honor Indigenous knowledge systems and revitalize our transitional practices.

- 3. Indigenous Peoples, and their knowledge systems, must inform the design, implementation, and monitoring of safe, renewable, and sustainable energy systems, with an emphasis on community-managed mini-grids and decentralized energy systems based on reciprocity and responsibility.**

“As Indigenous Peoples, we used to light our way not with electricity, but by using resin from the forest to provide light. This was our light. Many years have passed, and we are beginning to forget this knowledge that we used to practice.”

“When we talk about bringing new energy technologies, it needs to be done with the consent of the community where it’s taking place. In addition, once the community agrees to it, we need to have continuous consultations”

Indigenous knowledge holders noted of their knowledge systems in understanding what is responsible energy systems, drawing on those that minimize the impact on the natural world. Indigenous knowledge holders also spoke about the need to move past economies of accumulation and individual profit maximization (i.e., capitalism) towards those that honor Indigenous economies. A key element of it was the importance of investing in the protection and transmission of Indigenous knowledge, including through the importance of capacity building and intergenerational knowledge transmission in a holistic way.

4. Indigenous women’s participation in the decision-making processes related to energy transition is essential to ensure the appropriate consideration of family, future generations, and community needs.

Indigenous knowledge holders highlighted the specific role of Indigenous women in decision-making related to energy. They noted that the consideration of a potential projects impacts on the community, is intimately related to the role of women as life-givers, as well as their connection to future generations.

5. Indigenous Peoples require the prioritization of and respect for human rights, particularly the rights of Indigenous Peoples throughout the energy transition process to ensure dignity and safeguard land, territories, and resources.

“Our rights and traditional practices are consolidated in our respectful relationship with nature. The way we need to create energy is keeping the environment clean, in solidarity with one another. It is important to make a fair transition of sustainable energy to our communities.”

“We need to be at the table and not on the table.”

Indigenous knowledge holders were clear that a rights-based approach is essential to ensuring the energy transition does not reproduce colonialism, including in areas considered green, and called for recognition of Indigenous Peoples as rights-holders.

Round table 3: Seeds of Reciprocity: Indigenous approach to nourishing lands and people

The third roundtable was focused on food, asking Knowledge Keepers to respond to two general questions:
i) How do Indigenous food systems and agricultural practices foster a reciprocal relationship with the Land?
ii) What role doe Indigenous plant varieties and agricultural techniques play in building resilience of all against the changing climate conditions? Based on these questions, the following recommendations were shared:

1. Indigenous Peoples recognize the deep, interconnectedness between ourselves, the natural world, and our ancestral practices of food sharing, sovereignty, and self-determination:

“We need to practice and be part of the relationships of our ancestors, mother sun, mother moon, energy from the sun, from the moon in order to have a good production.”

"Another crucial system is knowing how to communicate with the seed, with the plants, with the corn. As a culture, we have communication, songs, and dance, which are of utmost importance for growth and a prosperous harvest."

Indigenous knowledge holders emphasized the importance of reciprocal agricultural practices, braiding spirituality with technology. These practices demonstrate a profound understanding and respect of the interconnection between Indigenous knowledge systems, our cultural practices and the concept of sustainability. Our relationship, and communication with the natural world, including celestial bodies, reflects a deeply wholistic approach. This profound understanding of the reciprocity between humans and the natural world is essential for environmental harmony.

2. Indigenous Peoples practices of regenerative agricultural, sustainable harvesting, and stewarding biocultural diversity are vital to build Indigenous-to-Indigenous collaboration and solidarity networks.

"Inuit do not have agricultural presentations, here with fellow Inuit from Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, we are a hunting society, rely on our hunting and our hunting cycles are phases of the moon."

"We have to work together. Changes in river waters, changing the possibility of fishing. Hunting affected by climate change, loss of permafrost, the ground is not cold."

The presence of such collaboration and deep knowledge exchanges among Indigenous Peoples and knowledge holders, demonstrates our clear willingness to create collective strategies of resilience. The recognition of this prominence within international Indigenous spaces, such as the commitment to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, reflects a growing awareness of the importance of Indigenous voices in shaping global discussions for a sustainable future through an Indigenous lens.

3. Indigenous Peoples practices of regenerative agricultural, sustainable harvesting, and bio-cultural stewardships are climate solutions.

"Take care of nature, will give you enormous benefits, take care, give the gifts of nature."

"Our practices are not of the old way but the right way. We cannot ignore that lands are cultural landscapes as it gives us all we need."

" Genetic diversity is important, it is something that strength our ability to adapt to this situation, all methods based on local practices, we don't need to use external resources. Long term adaptation, traditional knowledge, important for diversity. Cultural preservation is also important, all these practices also helps sustain biodiversity. "

Prioritizing biodiversity and holistic practices reflect a comprehensive approach to agriculture, acknowledging the interconnectedness of ecosystems. The emphasis on nature's gifts and cultural land management highlights the deep respect for the environment as a source of sustenance, which in return has developed practices of harvesting and agricultural practices that employ place-based strategies, employing plant selection, maintaining a variety of crops, seed-sharing, and safeguarding ecological balance.

Indigenous knowledge holders practiced sustainability by considering the interconnectedness of flora and fauna within the ecosystem, uplifting traditional land management involves marking trees, boundary demarcation. Indigenous teachings emphasize the reciprocal nature of the relationship with the land, with nature providing enormous benefits when treated with care and respect.

4. Indigenous Peoples see food sovereignty as a unifying force.

"Food sovereignty has impacts on how we relate to each other and to the land. Metis law of the buffalo hunt, cultivation of food and medicinal."

"World needs our knowledge, not to expropriate it, but realize that these are solutions that are thousands of years old, rooted in customs, alive, and needed."

"The future looks good, commonalities, the world needs our knowledge."

For Indigenous Peoples, food sovereignty plays both a cultural and spiritual role, demonstrating its potential as a unifying force while fostering empowerment and solidarity among Indigenous communities. Indigenous knowledge holders shared examples of how their communities are resisting challenges from governments, large dams, seed companies, and external pressures to preserve food sovereignty. Food sovereignty in this context, therefore, emerges not only as a response to said challenges but also as a cultural empowerment tool, strengthening culture of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous knowledge holders called for greater solidarity, uplifting the important role that Indigenous-led solidarity organizations play in empowering communities globally, providing spaces for sharing knowledge, experiences, and solutions. Together, this allows Indigenous Peoples to collectively resist external impositions on their traditional food systems.

5. Indigenous Peoples have used agricultural technologies and sciences, grounded in their knowledge systems, that have been proven effective in sustaining the lifeways of communities without harming the environment and water. These extended to traditional practices such as gardening, fishing, hunting, and spiritual/ceremonial practices for land, water, and conservation.

"Indigenous Peoples and the ways of gardening, fishing, hunting and sustaining communities are the solution to making Land, Seas and the environment heal."

"Agdal," a traditional knowledge characteristic deployed in Morocco, allows communities and herders to cope with the insecurity related to the use of natural resources in an agro-pastoral economy highly dependent on climate regions...Diversification and adaptation involve acquiring ancestral knowledge on accessing and sharing natural resources, plants, and others."

Indigenous Peoples engage in food practices that are grounded in place. For hunting-based societies, such as those in the Arctic, keystone cultural species are essential for the continuation of their cultures and identities. Others rely on regenerative agriculture and seed sharing, grounded in a reciprocal relationship with the land and water.

6. Indigenous food sovereignty is intertwined with the natural world in which it relies. Indigenous Peoples see environmental protection and resistance as essential to preserving Indigenous food ways.

"We are the People that live in the mountains and in the sea, we rely on the ocean and in the sea. Ancestral knowledge and ideas, but affected by mining and extraction, logging companies, all going against our will."

"Now the time to harvest and the planting the seeds is different, they don't know the weather anymore. They are trying to block avenues. This is an important space, create space for us to bring the problems we are facing."

Indigenous Peoples engage legal mechanisms to promote the protection of their rights and spiritual connections to land and water. This works to protect their cultural heritage and lifeways against logging, mining, and other exploitative practices. Their resilience through land protection efforts showcases an intersectional to environmental preservation, combining cultural, spiritual, and legal strategies.

7. Intergenerational Equity and Knowledge Transmission is essential for Indigenous Peoples to share their knowledge of bio-cultural diversity, seeds, and agriculture:

"Talk about intergenerational affects, know our history in our country, still live in that era, my generation, pass onto our youth to have what our generations have, our generational food."

"We talk about intergenerational equity and climate justice in these climate negotiations. But our values, knowledge, and how we understand and interact with nature is intergenerational equity embodied. That is our best practice."

"I grew up learning that we must use all parts of the reindeer, and with this also comes a respect and gratitude for her. She provides us with food, material and protection, and thus we are obliged to protect her. This is what I now pass on to my son."

Indigenous youth emphasize the importance of intergenerational knowledge exchange, building on our knowledge system practices. Climate justice, as a guiding framework, reflects a forward-looking approach, ensuring that traditional wisdom adapts to modern challenges while preserving core Indigenous principles.

Round table 4: Weaving the Threads of life: Indigenous youth insights into the Water-Energy-Food interconnectedness

The final roundtable brought together the three previous roundtables, looking for their interconnections. Indigenous knowledge holders were asked to respond to three general questions: i) What practices do you draw on from your elders and history that help your people face water-energy-food- climate change related challenges? ii) How do your people traditionally manage the intricate relationship between water, energy, and food, while maintaining the sacred balance that enables all life forms to thrive? Iii) Could you provide recommendations or practices you have been using to share knowledge from your elders? How can this be further strengthened Based on these questions, the following recommendations were shared:

1. Indigenous youth draw heavily on the knowledge and experience of Elders and knowledge holders to support the intergenerational transmission and continuation of traditional practices, language, and knowledge

“Learning from elders, teaching throughout a way of living, interconnected with the environment.”

“Our land is changing... dependence on modern ways of practices. How can we continue your work if we are not being taught this valuable knowledge?”

Indigenous youth emphasize the importance of cultural practices passed down by knowledge holders as the foundation of their knowledge systems and advocating for holistic land-based education. They reject the imposition of Western academic systems and desire additional support, financial and intergenerational, to create safe spaces for Indigenous youth to learn their culture and traditions. Knowledge holders must be positioned as central to climate action moving forward.

2. Indigenous Peoples have traditional practices of stewardship that are grounded in reciprocity, relationality, and interconnectedness.

“Hunt with sustainable manner, share with the community, use resources responsibly, water is sacred”

“In our calendar, we have phases of the moon, how to take care of the forests... it’s a good space to say we shouldn’t forget our roots.”

Since time immemorial, Indigenous Peoples have used sustainable practices that emphasize the sacredness and interconnection between themselves and the natural world. They stress the interconnection and interdependence of humans with the natural world, describing how adaptation stems from the environment, not from humans. This is all grounded in actions and practices that employ sustainable practices, emphasizing the sacredness of water and other constituents of the land with our interdependence with nature. This knowledge guides their relationship with place, ensuring a harmonious relationship with celestial bodies including the sun and moon.

3. Indigenous Peoples require the development of specific tools and funding mechanisms to create opportunities for inclusion and knowledge sharing between all regions.

“... prioritize international funding for communities, develop solutions that sustain life, respect nature, manage resources responsibly.”

“We need to adopt an inclusive and participative approach, foster community and inclusivity.”

Indigenous youth knowledge holders stress the need for direct and sustainable funding to support community-led efforts, to restore ancestral practices, and to communicate the importance of inclusive and

participatory approaches in sharing knowledge. The practice of solidarity building was identified as a key way to develop inter-cultural alliances, share experiences, strategies, and solutions.

4. Indigenous Peoples see how the impacts of climate change are compounded and cumulative to the impacts of colonial practices on the interconnection between water, food, and energy.

“... impact of companies, lack of access to essential services, influence on land use, negative impacts of climate change.”

“Colonization, loss of formal ownership of the land... climate change is the conflation of all these different crises.”

Indigenous Peoples not only face current challenges from the growing impacts of a rapidly changing climate, but these impacts are compounded by a history of colonization. Youth knowledge holders shared proposals to highlight the importance of their ancestral knowledge systems in developing new practices for the next seven generations. Indigenous agricultural practices were identified as a key solution to advance these proposals.

5. Indigenous to Indigenous partnerships are key tools to advance Indigenous Peoples solidarity internationally to advance systemic change.

“... the importance of global connections, responsibility to fight for the land under the threat to water sovereignty and the need for international attention on these issues.”

“The ones that should be listening are not here in the room... I know the FWG will do the work to bring this to high-level dialogues.”

Indigenous youth knowledge holders highlighted the specific role of Indigenous youth in the global context. This role must be rights-based, recognizing the collective and inherent rights that Indigenous Peoples possess, as confirmed in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. These rights emanate from a profound connection to the Land, a commitment to sustainable practices, and a call for global attention to the challenges Indigenous Peoples are facing in the context of water, energy, food and climate change.

6. Indigenous Peoples advance diverse practices to operationalize their relationship and understanding of the natural world, including through legal recognition and the rights of nature.

“River legal personhood, it has the same rights as a person in New Zealand.”

“We need to create rights for the water... Water sovereignty - defending our rights is defending the rights of the land.”

Indigenous knowledge holders shared examples of how some Indigenous Peoples, and their communities, are seeking legal recognition of the rights of nature, emphasizing that protecting water is fundamental to

preserving the land. These are concrete examples of bridging our legal systems, learnt from elders and the Land itself, with modern day legal mechanisms.

III. Summary of intervention from Parties and observers from the floor

The second part of the Annual Gathering brought Indigenous knowledge holders into discussion with Party representatives, members of constituted bodies, and other relevant international organizations. The dialogue was framed around one central question:

How can Parties and Constituted Bodies integrate the outcomes from the roundtables in their deliberations under the UNFCCC processes and in framing the national climate policy?

Based on this question, representatives from several countries, including Australia, Canada, Colombia, Finland, Mexico, New Zealand, and Spain, on behalf of the European Union, United States of America, in addition to knowledge holders and constituencies such as RINGO, reemphasized that Indigenous knowledge and leadership must be central to climate action, with respect for their rights, culture, and contributions. Some key reflections are summarized below:

- Party representatives highlighted the crucial role of Indigenous knowledge in addressing climate change and emphasized their holistic worldview, contrasting it with compartmentalized Western approaches. There was a strong call for collaboration, deep listening, and rebuilding trust between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.
- Several representatives stressed the importance of incorporating Indigenous perspectives into national climate policies, with specific references to partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, highlighting their stewardship. The weaving of Indigenous knowledge into climate solutions was seen as essential for biodiversity conservation, sustainable practices, and achieving climate resilience.
- Party representatives highlighted their commitments to ensuring Indigenous rights, aligning with international frameworks like the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the development of climate policies based on Indigenous principles.
- Additionally, representatives advocated for Indigenous inclusion in decision-making processes, particularly within platforms like the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP).
- Parties highlighted need for policies that support direct funding for Indigenous territorial management and emphasized the importance of recognizing legal rights to land, resources, and traditional knowledge in climate action. Others highlighted the spiritual dimensions of Indigenous worldviews, cautioning against commodifying nature and advocating for ethical protocols to protect Indigenous knowledge.

For the high-level summary of interventions from different Parties and observers from the floor during Part II of the gathering, please refer to Annex I

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Annex I: Overview of intervention from Parties and observers from the floor

Australia: Highlighted the holistic worldview of Indigenous Peoples, emphasizing the interconnectedness of knowledge, language, lifestyle, culture, and respect for nature, which is in contrast with Western approaches that compartmentalize knowledge. Stressed the need for collaboration and advocated for deep listening and understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Highlighted the significant role of Indigenous Peoples in biodiversity conservation and climate solutions despite having minimal impact on climate issues. Supported inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in national adaptation plans and calls for respect for Indigenous rights in climate action efforts, and emphasized the importance of rebuilding trust and working together to address climate change.

New Zealand: Expressed strong support for the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples platform (LCIPP) as a crucial mechanism for facilitating Indigenous participation in UNFCCC processes. Highlighted the significance of water and emphasized the deep connection Indigenous Peoples have with nature. Underscored the importance of empowering Indigenous knowledge and leadership, citing the Maori concept of Kaitiakitanga (stewardship). New Zealand's climate policy response involves partnering with Maori communities, guided by a treaty commitment to collaboration. This partnership aims to establish a platform for modern climate action, focusing on supporting climate projects for Maori communities and elevating the Maori worldview. Reiterated New Zealand's commitment to Indigenous representation in official delegations and their dedication to upholding Indigenous rights in climate action efforts.

- **Canada**
emphasized the intrinsic link between Indigenous rights and effective climate action, stressing the necessity for ethical and equitable engagement with Indigenous Peoples, in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Shared work to collaborate with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis through climate tables to integrate their viewpoints into national climate policies and actions, and provided additional examples, such as incorporating Indigenous climate leadership into Canada's climate plan and nationally determined contributions to the Paris Agreement. Adopted the UNDRIP Act to ensure alignment with UNDRIP in laws and regulations. Supported the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform and advocated for the active participation of Indigenous Peoples in UNFCCC processes. Highlighted the importance of rights-based and inclusive approaches in achieving effective climate action, citing findings from the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report. Encouraged the UNFCCC process to continue creating formal spaces for Indigenous engagement and prioritizing rights-based approaches for better climate outcomes.
- **Colombia**
Emphasized the crucial role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in climate change management due to their traditional knowledge and stewardship of biodiversity. Outlined challenges, including mainstreaming human rights in climate action, capacity building, policy adjustments, and ensuring Indigenous approaches are incorporated into climate discussions. Committed to developing a national plan for climate resilience based on Indigenous knowledge systems. An Indigenous leader stresses the importance of preserving territories governed by Indigenous systems and calls for policies aligned with Indigenous principles and direct funding

for territorial management. The Indigenous Peoples Organization of Colombia emphasized the need for policies to incorporate Indigenous principles, support direct financing for territorial management, protect Indigenous rights, and recognize Indigenous knowledge systems as essential for ecosystem conservation and climate action. Advocated for dialogue between governments and Indigenous Peoples and underscore the importance of Indigenous territories as a response to climate change.

- **Spain on behalf of the European Union**

Highlighted the interconnectedness of water, energy, land, and people, underscoring the need for collective action to combat climate change. Acknowledged the unique ability of Indigenous Peoples to drive transformative change through their knowledge systems and holistic understanding of nature. Commended the role of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples platform (LCIPP) in facilitating knowledge exchange and capacity building, and noted the platform's effective operation, even amid the challenges posed by the pandemic. Looking ahead, voiced support for renewing the LCIPP's mandate to continue leading the process. Emphasized the significance of the upcoming Global Stocktake in shaping collective action and expressed support for recognizing the LCIPP's importance in the draft text. Concluded by thanking all contributors and emphasizing the importance of inclusive processes in rethinking and improving global climate efforts.

- **United States of America**

Acknowledged the valuable role played by the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) in integrating Indigenous voices and expertise into the UNFCCC process. Underscored the significance of Indigenous communities as essential partners in addressing climate change. Highlighted various efforts undertaken by the US government to enhance partnerships with tribal nations both domestically and internationally. Initiatives such as the White House Council on Native American Affairs and the Indigenous Peoples Conservation Advisory Network were cited as examples of endeavors aimed at incorporating Indigenous knowledge into US policy. Reflecting on their participation in Facilitative Working Group meetings, emphasized the importance of improving the integration of Indigenous perspectives into broader climate discussions. Shared a successful example of incorporating Indigenous knowledge into discussions on non-market approaches during negotiations on Article 6.8. Expressed hope for strengthening the LCIPP's reach within the UNFCCC process and emphasized the importance of sharing experiences and lessons learned with leadership to promote greater Indigenous engagement in climate initiatives.

- **Finland**

Shared Finland's national development in integrating traditional Sami knowledge into their climate policy processes. Highlighted the establishment of the Sami Climate Council, an independent expert body tasked with incorporating Sami knowledge and perspectives into national climate policy. The council, comprised of 12 members representing traditional Sami knowledge and scientific expertise, aims to foster dialogue between Indigenous knowledge and modern science. At least half of the council members are holders of traditional Sami knowledge. Their role includes providing statements on climate policy plans to support the preparation of policies that promote Sami culture. Expressed their hope that the Sami Climate Council would contribute valuable inputs to the UNFCCC process, informed by the processes and dialogues of the LCIPP.

- **International-Lawyers Organizations (Constituency -RINGO)**

Commented on the progress made by the Parties to the Convention in including the voices of Indigenous Peoples. However, urged states to elevate this engagement by recognizing the legal

rights of Indigenous Peoples within COP decisions. Emphasized the importance of recognizing Indigenous Peoples' rights to land, territories, resources, culture, and traditional knowledge, which were not fully integrated into COP decisions yet. Called on states to provide strong written statements to the International Court of Justice by January 20, 2020, expressing recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights, particularly in relation to the court's advisory opinion on state responsibility for climate change.

- **Intervention from Great Grandmother Mary, Knowledge Holder from North America**
Expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the dialogue. Emphasized the importance of recognizing the difference between colonial legal frameworks and Indigenous Peoples' natural law, highlighting the value of spirituality over technology. Expressed concern that Indigenous perspectives might have been watered down or misunderstood in the process. Asserted that Mother Earth and natural resources were not commodities to be sold or exploited, as they were gifts from the Creator. Called for the ethical protocol for the protection and use of traditional Indigenous knowledge to be applied before sharing knowledge with UNFCCC bodies. Stressed the importance of ensuring that Indigenous voices were heard and respected in these processes to prevent the erosion of their hard work and perspectives.