

Informal Summary Report

LCIPP Fourth Annual Gathering of Knowledge Holders

Indigenous Values, Knowledge, and Self-Determination: Foundations for Collective Resilience
and Climate Action

I. Background and Overview of the Roundtable Dialogue

In conjunction with the 29th session of the Conference of Parties (COP 29), the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) hosted the fourth annual gathering of knowledge holders as part of the Activity 1 of the second three-year workplan of the LCIPP¹. 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 fourth annual gathering of knowledge holders was organized in two parts.

On 12 November 2024, the first part of the gathering brought together over 100 Indigenous knowledge holders and practitioners. This included 3 regionally nominated knowledge holders by FWG Indigenous Peoples representatives from each of the seven UN Indigenous sociocultural regions. The knowledge holders gathered to discuss the cultural heritages and language of Indigenous Peoples in the context of self-determination and their role in addressing climate change in a holistic way. Knowledge holders engaged in four roundtables, each centered on a specific theme:

- Round table 1: Land and Water: Reciprocity as a Pathway to Climate Resilience
- Round table 2: Salient Voices from the Ground: Indigenous-led Decision-Making
- Round table 3: Cultural Heritage and Language: Protecting Identity, Protecting Nature
- Round table 4: Pathways to Resilient Futures: Bridging Generations for Climate Action and Self-Determination

In addition to the roundtables, the knowledge holders provided their perspectives on self-determination and the next workplan of the LCIPP.

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

During the gathering, knowledge holders, including Elders, youth, men, women, and traditional practitioners shared and exchanged their knowledge, teachings, understandings, and solutions highlighting the role of self-determination in empowering Indigenous communities. Following a similar format to the first knowledge holders gathering in 2021, each roundtable included opening remarks from identified knowledge holders from all seven sociocultural regions, selected in collaboration with the FWG representatives, and the floor was then opened to contributions from other Indigenous knowledge holders participating in the dialogue. The discussion was profoundly impactful, as each speaker shared their reflection and experiences, with other participants of the dialogue.

On 14 November 2024, at the second part of the gathering with over 100 participants, knowledge holders presented their key messages and recommendations to representatives from Parties, international organizations, constituted bodies under 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 consist of a summary of key messages under each of the roundtable during Part I followed by the summary of interventions from the Parties and other stakeholders during part II of the dialogue.

II. Key messages and Recommendations

Overarching messages from Indigenous knowledge holders

"When we talk about Mother Nature, we are talking about ourselves. For our people, Mother Nature is not something else. Of course, there's physical difference, but for us as human beings, we are part of this, and the human beings should be protecting our knowledge, our wisdom as well."

"Climate justice without Indigenous leadership is missing a vital piece of a puzzle. We bring knowledge that is tied to the land and the future."

"If we lose the language, we also lose the ability to access this deep well of ecological wisdom. In contrast to the often fragmented, human-centered approach of Western policy, Indigenous knowledge systems [are] shaped by language."

"It is important to see the youth as agents of change. Youth-led climate initiatives [...] have inspired wider community actions and policy shifts and empowerment through self-determination, enabling the youth to [...] make decisions on behalf of their communities."

Round table 1: Land and Water: Reciprocity as a Pathway to Climate Resilience

The first roundtable centered on land and water, with knowledge holders invited to reflect on i) how do Indigenous values and worldviews guide sustainable land and water management? and ii) what are concrete and equitable ways to incorporate the knowledge and wisdom of Indigenous Peoples related to land and water stewardship into national and global climate policies and actions?

Based on responses to the guiding questions, below are some key messages:

1. Indigenous Peoples hold holistic and sacred connection to land and water, guided by traditional values of interconnectedness with nature.

“When we talk about Mother Nature, we are talking about ourselves. For our people, Mother Nature is not something else. Of course, there’s physical difference, but for us as human beings, we are part of this, and the human beings should be protecting our knowledge, our wisdom as well.”

“Sumak Kawsay (Good living in English), which promotes a way of life that lives in harmony with nature, is not just for humans but also for all the living beings in the ecosystem as well as the spiritual beings.”

Indigenous knowledge holders expressed the deep holistic and sacred relationship they have with land and water noting that nature is sacred, interconnected, and essential for the survival of all life forms. They emphasized that maintaining balance of natural elements is vital for sustaining ecosystems and ensuring harmony within the universe. Indigenous practices prioritize sustainable use of resources, such as in agriculture, pastoralism, and irrigation, guided by ancestral wisdom and spiritual values.

2. Traditional knowledge and ancestral practices of Indigenous Peoples in sustainable land and water management offer vital tools for resilience.

“The stewardship is vital for resilience because it respects the land's natural cycles and promotes balance within our ecosystems. This [Indigenous] model of governance encourages adaptation to climate change, honors the voices of the most impacted and centers on sustainability and not short-term gains.”

Indigenous knowledge holders shared diverse examples of traditional knowledge systems that have been passed across generations. Through practices like assessing soil and water conditions,

preserving biodiversity, and managing livestock, Indigenous communities sustain ecosystems and adapt to changing environmental conditions. Their worldviews advocate for balance, respect for nature, and responsible use of resources, ensuring that future generations inherit a resilient and harmonious ecosystem. These knowledge systems serve as vital sources to addressing global challenges like climate change, natural resource degradation, and food insecurity.

3. The monetization and commodification of Mother Earth is severely affecting the relationship of humans with nature.

“We are being forced into a foreign system of capitalism that involves the commodification of trees and air. To participate in these trading systems, it still involves a market system where we treat the air as commodity. How do we reconcile this (monetizing nature) and have we as knowledge holders done a mitigation analysis which includes Indigenous knowledge and values.”

Indigenous knowledge holders communicated the damaging impacts of colonization and modern capitalist systems on their relationship with nature, criticizing the monetization of natural resources, which reduces them to tradeable goods rather than sacred and interconnected life forms. Such commodification contradicts Indigenous worldviews that prioritize harmony, sustainability, and respect for the environment disrupting traditional knowledge, spiritual values, and ecological balance. The impacts are observed globally, from coal mining in southern Siberia to dam projects displacing Indigenous Peoples in North America and oil companies encroaching on territories in Ecuador. Indigenous knowledge holders recommended educating the world about the impact of colonialism and the valuable Indigenous knowledge that can combat climate change. They also emphasized the importance of adapting curricula to incorporate Indigenous knowledge, addressing the misuse of this knowledge, and creating education systems that reflect Indigenous values.

4. Climate policies and actions at all levels must recognize and respect the rights and traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples.

“We call the national states to uphold their international obligations to human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples when designing and implementing climate actions.”

“Indigenous Peoples require recognition of their rights to self-determination to fully support and revitalize their land and water stewardship efforts.”

For effective climate action, it is essential that policies and strategies acknowledge and uphold the rights and traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples. In Ecuador, for example, community-based governance models that combine Indigenous knowledge with modern technology have shown success in preserving territories, particularly through internal laws that protect non-agricultural areas for ecological preservation. However, while Indigenous values are often referenced in legal frameworks, their practical application remains limited. Climate policies, including national adaptation plans, must protect Indigenous access to land and water, recognizing Indigenous Peoples as rights-holders and key partners in decision-making. It was firmly advocated that international human rights obligations are fully upheld, with self-determination at the core, to preserve the balance within ecosystems. It was noted that international human rights obligations should be fully respected, with self-determination central to preserving ecosystem balance. Collaboration between Indigenous communities and governments was considered extremely essential to achieve meaningful progress and integrate Indigenous perspectives and rights into national climate strategies.

5. Education and access to finance are essential pathways to resilience.

“Indigenous knowledge has the possibility to fight the climate change impacts and help maintain life in this place.”

“Funding and resources are often directed towards top-down solutions, yet the greatest solutions may be found within Indigenous Peoples communities.”

“The rich knowledge base that we come from that's currently under threat, and that we create allies along the way, that we continue to change education systems that don't work for us through the establishment of alternative curriculum that reflect our Indigenous values, that we utilize research funding and research methodologies and research in sustainability.”

Access to finance is crucial for implementing sustainable land and water management practices guided by Indigenous knowledge and wisdom. Despite facing severe climate change impacts like droughts and floods, many Indigenous communities struggle to access financing mechanisms that support their traditional methods of environmental stewardship, especially in regions that have been preserved through Indigenous practices. To address this issue, there is a pressing need for funding mechanisms that are designed to reach these communities, enabling them to implement climate adaptation strategies that draw on their deep understanding of the land. Additionally, integrating Indigenous values and knowledge into national curricula is essential for building resilience. Education systems must reflect Indigenous practices on climate change adaptation,

ensuring that future generations are equipped with the tools to address environmental challenges. Through these efforts, both finance and education can support the revitalization of traditional practices, enhancing community resilience and sustainability in the face of climate change.

Round table 2: Salient Voices from the Ground: Indigenous-led Decision-Making

The second roundtable focused on Indigenous-led decision-making, with knowledge holders invited to respond to three questions: i) Indigenous governance systems and decision-making prioritizes community-centric decision-making, fostering inclusivity and ensuring that all voices are heard. Could you share experiences from your region/communities on how such processes, grounded in your culture, could contribute to climate justice in climate policies and actions? ii) How do Indigenous decision-making processes differ from other governance structures? In what ways can they contribute to inclusive and effective climate policies? and iii) Are there specific mechanisms you recommend ensuring Indigenous leadership in climate governance? If so, what are they?

Based on responses to the guiding questions, below are some key messages:

1. Indigenous governance systems are rooted in the principles of inclusivity, consensus-building and intergenerational responsibility.

“Our decision making isn’t just for today. It is for our children and grandchildren – that perspective changes everything about how we view climate policies.”

“Forest and land and all the rivers – all these are like a son and father, because they are supporting each other.”

Indigenous decision-making processes emphasize inclusivity, collective well-being, sustainability, and a deep respect for the interconnectedness of people and the nature. These processes prioritize sustainable practices, intergenerational equity, and environmental stewardship, in contrast to the short-term focus often seen in hierarchical, top-down governance models. For instance, a knowledge holder from Malaysia highlighted the importance of customary laws like *adat*, which enforce sustainable forest management and penalize over-exploitation, as well as practices like rotational farming that balance food production with ecosystem health, contributing to climate resilience. Despite challenges from colonial mindsets and constitutions that disregard their territories, Indigenous Peoples maintain a sacred relationship with nature and the cosmos, fundamental to the Earth’s survival. Indigenous governance models, such as

councils, ensure that diverse voices—elders, women, and youth—participate equally, contrasting with the top-down approaches of the formal systems. Recognizing Indigenous land rights, like Malaysia’s Native Customary Rights and the Philippines’ Indigenous People's Rights Act, is crucial for sustaining natural resources and ensuring climate justice, contributing to more inclusive and effective climate policies.

2. Indigenous Peoples possess invaluable ecological knowledge and sustainable practices, which have successfully preserved biodiversity and mitigated climate impacts over generations. This traditional ecological knowledge is vital to ensure climate justice.

“Climate justice without Indigenous leadership is missing a vital piece of a puzzle. We bring knowledge that is tied to the land and the future.”

“There is a sacred relationship with the land and all its beings. We have a responsibility to take care of the ecosystem and honor the spirits within it.”

Traditional ecological knowledge is profoundly connected to the land and offers valuable insights for climate adaptation and mitigation efforts. Indigenous Peoples share a reciprocal relationship with the nature, where they treat land as a living entity deserving care and respect, and not as a mere resource to be exploited. Indigenous sustainable practices focused on preserving biodiversity and mitigating climate impacts reflect a deep-seated responsibility to care for the ecosystem, their sacred relationship with the land and its beings. Their stewardship highlights the interconnectedness of land, people, and spirit, recognizing that healing the land and its people must occur simultaneously. However, the exclusion of Indigenous knowledge and rights continues to undermine effective climate action and environmental justice. Empowering Indigenous communities to lead land management and protection efforts is essential for achieving both climate and social justice. Actively involving Indigenous youth in decision-making ensures the preservation of this invaluable knowledge and respects the sacredness of nature, paving the way for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

3. Indigenous governance systems, laws, land rights, and decision-making principles must be formally recognized and supported by governments and international frameworks in climate policy.

“Empowering Indigenous councils in climate governance is not optional—it’s essential if we want policies that truly reflect the needs of the land and all its people.”

“Indigenous Peoples are not just stakeholders. We are rights holders, actors in our own right, and can drive solutions for the common good.”

“Climate policy should prioritize partnerships with Indigenous councils, integrating their insights and leadership for comprehensive and culturally relevant action.”

Despite being pivotal in climate-related decisions, Indigenous governance systems and councils often lack formal recognition, marginalizing their contributions to biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and adaptation efforts. Absence of proper frameworks including the Indigenous voices in climate policy decision-making further exacerbates the gap. Existing frameworks like ILO 169 are considered insufficient in upholding the rights of Indigenous Peoples and their territories, highlighting the need for recognition of Indigenous laws and principles in the national constitutions and international legal arenas in the context of environmental protection and self-determination. Insufficient legal recognition undermines the traditional governance systems and limits their influence in policy making in many Indigenous territories such as in Borneo. Knowledge holders strongly suggested that the governments and international frameworks must formally recognize and support Indigenous governance systems, land rights, and decision-making principles in climate policies. There was also a call to support Indigenous communities with resources and training to participate effectively in policy processes and traditional ecological knowledge resilience planning.

4. The commodification of nature and market-driven exploitation of natural resources fundamentally opposes to the sacred relationships with the land upheld by Indigenous Peoples.

“We can't commodify the land. We can't commodify our plant relatives. We can't commodify the water or the air. These will just cause more issues.”

“Money doesn't pay for our knowledge— a powerful reminder that Indigenous knowledge cannot be reduced to a financial transaction.”

Indigenous communities treat land, water, air, and beings as sacred entities and share a reciprocal relationship and a responsibility to honor the spirits within them. Commodification of the elements of nature threatens the integrity of Indigenous ways of life and undermines their intrinsic values, aggravating the environmental and social justice issues. Platforms like 'Rising Voices' showcase how Indigenous sciences can engage with Western science without commodifying Indigenous knowledge and practices, emphasizing collaboration and respect. Knowledge holders asserted that governments and societies must refrain from commodifying

Indigenous territories and natural resources and instead prioritize respecting their sacredness, protecting them, and honoring the invaluable ancestral wisdom that cannot be quantified in monetary terms.

5. Indigenous Peoples are leading in climate action with community-centered initiatives on environmental monitoring, sustainable practices, and climate adaptation. Need for further direct funding to support these actions.

“The solutions we seek for climate resilience often already exist in Indigenous communities; what’s needed are the formal support and respect for these approaches.”

Indigenous-led environmental programs have demonstrated remarkable success in protecting biodiversity, managing natural resources, and developing sustainable adaptation practices, underscoring the need for institutional support. For instance, the Maasai's rotational grazing practices have been sustainable and effective in biodiversity conservation, while prioritizing community well-being and environmental health, reflecting a stewardship approach rather than ownership. Rotational farming practices of Indigenous Peoples promote soil recovery, balance food production with ecosystem health, and reduce deforestation and emissions, while collaborative stewardship, including cultural burns and re-indigenizing landscapes, helps restore ecosystems and mitigate climate stresses. Events like the Four Winds Gathering and Mini Cubican (Water is Sacred) focus on water protection while engaging Indigenous youth in climate action. However, limited funding and resources allocation hinder the scalability of such programs, as financial support is typically directed toward centralized, top-down solutions. Thus, increased funding and institutional support are needed to ensure the effective, independent, and sustainable operation of Indigenous-led environmental initiatives.

Round table 3: Cultural Heritage and Language: Protecting Identity, Protecting Nature

The third roundtable centered on cultural heritage and language, with knowledge holders invited to reflect on i) How do cultures and languages shape Indigenous Peoples’ approaches to environmental stewardship and climate action? ii) In what ways can the protection and preservation of cultures and languages of Indigenous Peoples, and local languages, contribute to more effective climate policies and actions? iii) What recommendations or concrete actions could you propose to develop adaptive strategies for preserving cultural practices and languages guided by traditional knowledge, Indigenous knowledge and local knowledge systems?

Based on responses to the guiding questions, below are some key messages:

1. Indigenous culture and languages shape traditional knowledge and ensure the transmission of Indigenous practices and values of respect and interconnectedness with nature from generation to generation.

"If we lose the language, we also lose the ability to access this deep well of ecological wisdom. In contrast to the often fragmented, human-centered approach of Western policy, Indigenous knowledge systems [are] shaped by language."

"Indigenous Peoples have a deep and profound connection to their environment, shaping their unique approach to environmental stewardship and climate change action."

"Language is very essential in passing down knowledge about sustainable land management and conservation of biodiversity."

"Nature is not just a resource, but it is a living system with [...] cultural and linguistic ties."

Indigenous practices Peoples view the land, plants, and ecosystems as interconnected systems, rather than resources with economic value, informing a holistic approach to environmental stewardship. Knowledge holders described examples of traditional knowledge and practices on healing methods, food preservation, and agriculture and the importance of language and culture in shaping future generations' understanding and practices in nature and transmitting respectful approaches to biodiversity protection and climate action.

2. Language and cultural preservation depend on intergenerational knowledge sharing and the active involvement of youth in maintaining and revitalizing Indigenous cultural heritage.

"Revitalizing Indigenous languages is not just about preserving the past, but about ensuring the survival of the future."

"People said that the youth are not knowledge holders, and I would like to say that this is completely wrong. Because as the youth, we will continue with the legacy from our parents and grandparents."

Indigenous knowledge holders emphasized the vital role of youth in maintaining cultural continuity, strengthening community identity, especially in the face of the loss of elders and their wisdom. Examples of youth-led initiatives were shared including youth meetings in Latin America to share traditional knowledge and medicinal practices, collaboration with elders in designing

climate adaptation solutions rooted in traditional knowledge, land restoration projects in Africa and the use of digital storytelling and social media to safeguard and share cultural heritage. Knowledge holders highlighted that youth should be empowered as language keepers and knowledge holders to preserve Indigenous languages and cultural identities, but also to enhance environmental resilience and adaptability.

3. Safeguarding Indigenous cultural practices and languages requires intentional efforts such as oral documentation, maintaining place names, and creating dedicated spaces for cultural preservation.

"I wish that we could reflect in our decisions the point of reviving the culture of naming [...] places with their own Indigenous names. Those Indigenous names which are related to the mountains, rivers, tundra, rainforest and so on. Because places with Indigenous names always mattered."

"There is a lot of knowledge that hasn't been written yet. And why? Because once it is written, then it loses its own value. And that's why 'we're saying that this is not this solution. It is not about having a book or knowing what a medicinal plant means. Rather, we, as the new generations, we should continue practicing all this knowledge for decades, for generations to come, as not to lose the current value."

The loss of Indigenous knowledge and languages pose a significant risk for cultural continuity and environmental stewardship. Knowledge holders expressed that much of Indigenous knowledge is preserved through oral traditions and practices, rather than written records, to ensure the full meaning and context are maintained. Knowledge holders proposed several approaches to safeguard traditional linguistic and cultural heritage, such as documenting and archiving Indigenous knowledge systems and languages, including through songs, preserving Indigenous place names in digital maps, and creating more dedicated spaces for preservation of Indigenous languages and practices.

4. Recognizing and valuing Indigenous contributions are essential to address climate change and other challenges to the preservation of Indigenous language, culture, and traditional environmental stewardship.

"The value and the contribution that we provide as Indigenous Peoples will always be crucial. [...] Oftentimes, it is not scientifically acknowledged, however, we think it is key to add the value that we provide in [through] our traditional knowledge systems. We do it in a different way compared to scientific knowledge, but we are also contributing to climate change knowledge and research. It hasn't been proven scientifically, and that doesn't mean that it doesn't have any value."

“When I return home now, it is barely recognizable. Wildfires have destroyed all the trees. We have not seen a wolf in over a decade.”

Indigenous knowledge holders highlighted the threats to nature and traditional ways of life caused by colonialism, industrial activities, climate change and restrictive policies on cultural practices. They emphasized the importance of recognizing and valuing Indigenous rights, traditional knowledge and practices and called for greater acknowledgment of their unique scientific and cultural contributions, which offer vital tools for addressing climate change.

5. Weaving Indigenous knowledge, science, and ways of knowing into climate policies and actions fosters sustainable and just solutions to the climate crisis.

“We want to keep strengthening these knowledge systems. [...] We want to revitalize them so that the future generations will be able to practice our knowledge systems [...] We do not want to be left behind.”

“The core of climate action is Indigenous knowledge, science, and ways of knowing.”

Indigenous knowledge holders expressed the need to amplify Indigenous voices in climate policies and actions to trigger a shift towards more connected, just, and effective environmental stewardship. Policies aligned with Indigenous values and worldviews in protecting and restoring nature can also support the preservation of traditional cultural heritage. In the context of conservation, a knowledge holder shared the example of the Buffalo Treaty, an Indigenous-led effort to restore buffalo populations to restore ecological balance and strengthen cultural practices associated with the species, including traditional song, dance, and ceremonies.

Round table 4: Pathways to Resilient Futures: Bridging Generations for Climate Action and Self-Determination

The fourth roundtable centered on climate action and self-determination, with knowledge keepers invited to reflect on i) Indigenous Peoples, and their knowledge systems offer invaluable insights for addressing the climate crisis. What practices, knowledge systems have you learnt from your elders? ii) How can intergenerational knowledge sharing be strengthened to ensure that youth carry forward Indigenous-led climate action? iii) What are the specific roles and responsibilities of Indigenous youth and youth from local communities? iv) Could you provide recommendations or practices on tools you have been using to support community-led solutions? What role does this play in climate action?

Based on responses to the guiding questions, below are some key messages:

1. Indigenous knowledge systems and practices related to traditional hunting and gathering, sustainable land management, and food sovereignty have been passed down from elders to youth to address climate change.

“Our ancestors have always valued the protection of nature and the use of resources with their preservation for future generation. That is, a careful attitude was constantly passed down from generation to generation.”

Indigenous knowledge holders highlighted examples of intergenerational knowledge transfer, where elders pass on traditional wisdom and practices to youth. In Asia, youth in Malaysia have learned regenerative agricultural techniques, while in Nepal, youth have been taught cultural practices around clean water sources. In Bangladesh, traditional harvesting methods of shrimp and bamboo are shared with youth. In the Arctic, the Sámi People pass on traditional hunting and gathering knowledge to Indigenous youth, including seasonal practices for collecting berries and medicinal herbs.

2. Strengthening connections between elders and youth is vital to preserving traditional knowledge and amplifying Indigenous-led climate solutions.

“We must bring together Indigenous elders and the youth for knowledge sharing and provide us with the means to do so. We must ensure that Indigenous knowledge is not lost with the passing of our elders.”

“It's important to highlight the privilege it is to have an elder able to teach you, and to have access to an elder. Because of colonization and assimilation, many elders in my life, growing up, were afraid to share their teachings and stories to them. They were protecting me from the harm and violence”

“We have [been] collaborating with elders and knowledge holders [on] intergenerational knowledge sharing and mentorship in sustainable practices.”

Indigenous knowledge holders stressed the importance of preserving traditional knowledge, which is often passed down orally, to ensure cultural continuity during generational transitions. They recommended strengthening intergenerational connections through elder-youth councils, mentorship, and discussion questions to prompt elders on their experiences of environmental

change. Technology can also play a role in recording, capturing and documenting elder's traditional knowledge including through use of digital archives and social media.

3. Indigenous youth must be recognized and empowered as environmental stewards and agents of change to actively engage in climate policy and decision-making processes.

"It is important to see the youth as agents of change. [...] Youth led climate initiatives [...] have inspired wider community actions and policy shifts and also empowerment through self-determination and enabling the youth to [...] make decisions on behalf of their communities."

"The young people [are] here. The young people are here to shake things up, to say the uncomfortable statements and make you question is what we're doing here."

Indigenous knowledge holders highlighted the importance of creating mechanisms to enhance the engagement and participation of Indigenous youth in climate decision-making, including representation in international climate fora. Developing leadership skills and equipping youth with tools is crucial to amplify their voices as frontline defenders of ancestral lands and as climate activists.

4. Indigenous youth serve as bridges between tradition and innovation, blending traditional practices with modern technology and education to address climate change.

"We are here to help to communicate the relevance of traditional practices in a way that resonates with modern context, ensuring these methods are recognized and valued within both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities."

"It is very important to integrate the knowledge you get in school, the literacy, with the one we get from our elders, in ensuring that we can make policies, or we can make decisions at the ground level."

Indigenous youth play a vital role in connecting traditional knowledge and contemporary science, integrating wisdom from elders with modern education to promote sustainable practices and influence policy and decision-making. Indigenous youth are also leveraging new technology, such as digital mapping and social media, to innovate solutions to climate challenges that remain rooted in Indigenous knowledge and culture.

5. Addressing mental health challenges among Indigenous youth through connection and sovereignty is crucial.

“When you lose connection with the land, you lose connection with yourself.”

“The youth is facing [a] huge crisis. We're experiencing waves of suicides. And what we want to do is really work on the health of youth.”

Indigenous knowledge holders highlighted the pressing mental health crisis among many Indigenous youth, marked by increasing rates of suicides and stress. They emphasized the critical role of restoring connection to land and traditional knowledge, and fostering Indigenous sovereignty, including food sovereignty, as a pathway to enhance physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of Indigenous youth.

6. Solidarity and self-determination are vital to the advancement of Indigenous youth leadership on climate action.

“We call for stronger cooperation, support for initiatives to preserve traditional knowledge and ensure the equal participation of Indigenous Peoples in the development and implementation of climate policy.”

“Self-determination and protection of rights are fundamental elements in solving the difficulties we face in a situation where climate change threatens [the] traditional ways of Indigenous Peoples”

Indigenous knowledge holders stressed the importance of unity and solidarity in addressing the climate crisis. The recognition and respect of Indigenous rights, contributions, and self-determination is required not only to build a sustainable future, but also to preserve traditional knowledge and ensure equitable participation of Indigenous Peoples in climate policy and action. Through self-determination, Indigenous youth are empowered to act as agents of change, spearheading climate initiatives that inspire community-wide actions and policy shifts while making decisions that represent and benefit their communities.

Open Discussion

Additional key messages on self-determination emerged during an open discussion amongst knowledge holders, following the four roundtables, based on the following questions:

- 1. How does self-determination empower Indigenous communities to protect their lands, language and culture in the face of climate change?*
- 2. Reflecting on our conversations today, what suggestions do you have for strengthening decision-making, and furthering youth involvement?*

On self-determination and empowerment of Indigenous communities:

- **Promotion of sustainable development:** Self-determination is essential both for preserving traditional ways of life and advancing development aligned with Indigenous values. Indigenous self-governance enables communities to reject environmentally harmful projects and advocate for initiatives that support traditional ways of life and respect for nature.
- **Preservation of Indigenous language, knowledge, and culture:** Safeguarding Indigenous languages and cultural practices is essential for environmental resilience and community strength. Elders play a pivotal role in passing down traditional skills such as sustainable hunting, gathering, and farming practices. Integrating Indigenous knowledge into school curricula strengthens cultural identity and promotes youth engagement in environmental protection. Activities like Indigenous sports and cultural events further reinforce community resilience and environmental awareness.
- **Legal and institutional recognition:** Legal recognition of Indigenous land rights is crucial for self-determination, as it enables communities to protect their resources and cultural heritage. Frameworks like the Buffalo Treaty, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) - Articles 3 and 31, and ILO Convention 169 reinforce self-determination by affirming Indigenous rights. National reforms, such as Mexico's constitutional recognition of Indigenous rights, empower communities to manage resources autonomously and access funding.

On strengthening decision-making and youth involvement:

- **Youth leadership development:** Phased training programs, regional youth forums and mentorship programs can all help build the knowledge, skills and capacity of youth on climate change to engage in global discussions and empower them to continue climate advocacy and education in their communities.

- **Enhanced participation mechanisms:** Creating dedicated spaces for Indigenous voices in national and international platforms ensures meaningful inclusion in decision-making processes. Indigenous parliamentarians can bridge local issues with global climate policies, advocating for rights and resources at all levels.
- **Alignment of community and policy efforts:** Harmonizing domestic policies with international frameworks ensures consistent support for Indigenous self-governance. Strengthened collaboration between elders and youth bridges generational gaps and ensures the continuity of traditional practices.

Additional recommendations to strengthen decision-making and youth involvement:

- Leverage virtual platforms to share best practices and resources, enhancing accessibility for remote communities.
- Advocate for legal and educational reforms to recognize Indigenous knowledge as integral to climate resilience.
- Build international solidarity among Indigenous groups to address shared challenges such as land grabbing, militarization, and cultural erosion.
- Prioritize discussions on language preservation, spiritual practices, and local governance as key pillars of self-determination.

Reflections and recommendations for the next workplan of the LCIPP

Under this segment, the knowledge holders provided recommendations and reflections based on the following questions:

1. *What theme would you like the FWG members to take into consideration for the next annual gathering of knowledge holders to be held in conjunction with COP 30?*
2. *Do you have any suggestions on enhancing the design of the annual gathering of knowledge holders?*

On the theme for the next annual gathering:

- **Youth Leadership and Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer:** Emphasize the role of Indigenous youth as bridges between generations, preserving traditional knowledge while innovating modern climate solutions.
- **Cultural Heritage and Language Preservation:** Focus on the protection and revitalization of Indigenous languages as a foundation for sustaining traditional ecological knowledge and governance.
- **Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination:** Strengthen dialogue on embedding Indigenous governance systems within national and international climate

frameworks, aligned with UNDRIP principles. Knowledge holders emphasized self-determination and governance systems as central to climate resilience, highlighting how Indigenous governance can inform equitable and sustainable climate solutions.

On enhancing the design of the gathering:

- **Inclusive Participation Mechanisms:** Ensure diverse representation from all regions, with dedicated spaces for Indigenous women, youth, and elders to share their insights.
- **Digital Accessibility:** Incorporate virtual platforms and resources to increase participation, particularly for remote Indigenous communities.
- **Structured Follow-Up Processes:** Establish mechanisms for tracking and implementing recommendations shared during gatherings to ensure accountability and tangible outcomes.
- **Capacity Building and Language Accessibility:** Knowledge holders recommended increasing capacity-building programs and ensuring all gatherings and materials are accessible in Indigenous languages, fostering inclusivity and respect for cultural diversity.

III. Summary of interventions from Parties and other stakeholders

The second part of the Annual Gathering brought Indigenous knowledge holders into discussions with Party representatives, members of constituted bodies and other relevant organizations. The dialogue was framed around a 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?

Some key reflections are summarized below:

1. **Recognition and Integration of Indigenous Knowledge:** Parties emphasized the indispensable role of Indigenous knowledge in informing climate policies and actions. Finland highlighted the Sámi Climate Council, which integrates traditional and scientific knowledge into policy. Canada reaffirmed the value of Indigenous knowledge in strengthening climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. Indonesia underscored the importance of customary practices, such as preserving traditional forests, as part of biodiversity conservation and climate resilience. Russia advocated for viewing nature as an active partner rather than a resource, creating space for the weaving of Indigenous knowledge.
2. **Support for Indigenous-Led Climate Solutions:** Parties highlighted various strategies to support Indigenous-led climate solutions by integrating traditional knowledge into policy

frameworks, fostering participation, and addressing representation challenges. Australia, for example, detailed its partnership with First Nations People to include Indigenous perspectives in risk assessment and education programs, while supporting their active participation in international fora, such as COP sessions, through dedicated funding and spaces like the Australian pavilion.

3. **Incorporating Indigenous knowledge into the UNFCCC process:** Constituted bodies emphasized the critical role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in advancing climate adaptation actions. The Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) highlighted the importance of integrating traditional knowledge with scientific insights and shared an invitation for Indigenous Peoples and local communities to participate in the upcoming 2025 NAP Expo. The Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB) intends to prioritize traditional knowledge in its next workplan, aligning efforts with the LCIPP to enhance collaboration and impact.
4. **Indigenous Youth and Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer:** Indigenous youth were recognized as crucial actors in bridging generational knowledge gaps and integrating traditional wisdom with modern tools. Mexico and Finland discussed the importance of youth leadership, with Mexico emphasizing Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) to ensure young leaders are empowered in decision-making. Finland highlighted the importance of intergenerational dialogue to preserve cultural and ecological heritage.
5. **Addressing Challenges in Policy Implementation:** Parties, such as Australia, acknowledged structural and practical barriers to integrating Indigenous governance models into rigid policy and funding frameworks.

Annex I

Detailed Contributions from Parties, Constituted Bodies and other Stakeholders

- **Australia**

Australia emphasized its commitment to integrating Indigenous perspectives into climate action by collaborating with First Nations Peoples on risk assessment processes and educational programs. The country supports Indigenous Peoples' participation at COP sessions by funding their involvement and creating dedicated spaces for their voices to be heard, such as at the Australian pavilion. However, Australia acknowledged challenges in aligning holistic Indigenous-led solutions with rigid funding requirements. Recommendations included continuing the work of LCIPP in integrating Indigenous knowledge into the national and global climate policies while maintaining financial and institutional support for Indigenous leadership.

- **Canada**

Canada reaffirmed its strong support for the rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly their right to self-determination, and recognized the critical value of Indigenous knowledge in strengthening climate policies. Canada highlighted the growing participation of Indigenous Peoples in LCIPP processes over the past six years, a development the country fully supports. Additionally, Canada promoted equitable engagement and knowledge sharing through FPIC, positioning these principles as foundational for effective and respectful collaboration in climate policy design and implementation.

- **Brazil**

Brazil highlighted its support for LCIPP while noting the significant challenges Indigenous Peoples face in participation and decision-making within climate discussions. The need to strengthen national engagement and build capacity to amplify Indigenous voices in Brazil and on the global stage was emphasized. Ahead of the 30th session of COP (COP 30), Brazil called for decisive action to bridge these gaps and ensure substantial Indigenous involvement. Brazil also underscored the global impact of Indigenous knowledge in driving climate action and expressed eagerness in showcasing these practices at COP 30, advocating for large-scale Indigenous representation in the session.

- **Russia**

Russia presented a shifting perspective, advocating for viewing nature as an active partner rather than merely a resource. This shift was regarded crucial to create meaningful opportunities to incorporate Indigenous knowledge in climate action. Further, Russia

conveyed the importance of pairing scientific approaches with the ancestral wisdom of Indigenous Peoples to foster innovative and inclusive strategies for environmental stewardship.

- Finland

Finland outlined its efforts to integrate Sámi knowledge into national climate strategies, notably through the Sámi Climate Council, a legally established body composed of 12 experts with a 4-year mandate to blend scientific and traditional knowledge. Finland also recognized three Sámi languages as official in the Sámi homeland, promoting cultural preservation and intergenerational knowledge transfer. The Sámi Adaptation Plan was highlighted as a critical measure to address the unique impacts of climate change on traditional Sámi livelihoods, including reindeer herding practices. Finland highlighted the need for intergenerational and intercultural dialogue involving youth, women, and elders in shaping climate resilience through Sámi knowledge and heritage.

- Indonesia

Indonesia showcased its inclusive approach to incorporating Indigenous knowledge and governance into national frameworks. The country promotes customary forests as an essential part of biodiversity conservation and Indigenous rights protection. Educational curricula now include content on Indigenous knowledge systems, fostering greater awareness among younger generations. Indonesia also highlighted its conflict resolution strategies, which involve the peaceful inclusion of Indigenous voices in disputes over land and resources. Despite these advancements, the need to balance development with conservation remains a persistent challenge, prompting Indonesia to advocate for stronger legal recognition of Indigenous territories and governance structures.

- United States

The United States reaffirmed its role as a key supporter of the LCIPP, emphasizing the value of learning from Indigenous Peoples and integrating their traditional knowledge into policy frameworks. The country expressed its commitment to ensuring that Indigenous knowledge systems inform global negotiations and climate action strategies. U.S. representatives called for the continued inclusion of Indigenous voices in climate discussions, highlighting the importance of co-creating solutions that are both equitable and culturally appropriate.

- Mexico

Mexico, as an intercultural and diverse state, recognizes the importance of the crucial role of Indigenous Peoples, including youth, in conservation and in the development of nationally determined contributions, incorporating traditional knowledge through free, prior and

informed consent. The biocultural heritage of Mexico, safeguarded by Indigenous Peoples as nature's protectors, underscores the importance of their contributions. Mexico is committed to including youth perspectives and developing materials for Indigenous education that ensures well-being and respect of human rights.

- Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG)

The LEG highlighted the importance of inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including in the update of the technical guidelines for the Global Goal on Adaptation. Indigenous Peoples and local communities are invited to participate in the next NAP Expo in 2025. The LEG emphasized the importance of inputs from Indigenous Peoples and local communities, particularly traditional knowledge, to complement scientific knowledge in Least Developed Countries.

- Knowledge Holder from Eastern Europe

A knowledge holder from Eastern Europe raised concerns about the destruction of Indigenous archaeological sites and graves caused by resource extraction activities. Coal mining companies were highlighted as frequent violators of these sacred sites. The speaker proposed submitting a formal request to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to address these issues and secure stronger protections for Indigenous cultural heritage.

- Adaptation Committee

The Adaptation Committee representative shared findings from a policy brief on the role of Indigenous and local knowledge in adaptation planning. The brief emphasized the benefits of Indigenous knowledge for sustainable land and water management, institutional arrangements, and resilience-building. Recommendations included fostering partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and ensuring their contributions are systematically integrated into climate policies, particularly the national adaptation plans.

- Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB) Representative

The PCCB focused on the critical role of capacity building in preserving and amplifying Indigenous knowledge systems. The representative emphasized the importance of avoiding duplication of efforts and instead fostering collaboration between the PCCB and LCIPP. In its next work plan, the PCCB intends to prioritize the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, ensuring these efforts align with the LCIPP's goals and amplify their collective impact.