

Opening Statement – Indigenous Peoples to UNCSD17

Indigenous peoples have one central message to CSD17.

The current social and ecological crisis arises from an industrial development system which privileges natural resource extraction and wealth concentration in the hands of rich and powerful governments and corporations.

Given these roots of this modern crisis, governments at CSD17, must shift focus and emphasis towards valuing ecosystems and the role of indigenous peoples, small farmers, fisherfolk, pastoralists and land-based producers, and the specific contributions of women. This requires a combined ecosystem approach and human rights-based approach, which revitalizes and strengthens the resilience of ecosystems and local communities, to achieve food, water and energy security and self-determination. 85% of the world's food is consumed near where it is grown, or at least, within the country. The percentage of world food sold through the industrial food market is uncertain, and big farms are more likely to grow feed, fiber and ornamental crops. Indigenous peoples and peasants have also bred and donated 6.5 million plant varieties for storage in ex-situ seed banks, thus also sustaining the world food system.

Increased support for localization in production and consumption patterns is required, rather than intensified centralization and globalization. Supporting local agriculture means reducing energy and GHG emissions all along the food chain.

The contextual and holistic dimensions of indigenous traditional knowledge, farmers and women's knowledge must be valued and fully recognized. Local coping and adaptation strategies need urgent support. Our human rights, including land rights must be secured as well as our full and effective participation in all decision-making and implementation in land use planning and ecosystem regeneration, agriculture and rural development, and drought and desertification.

Nature and poor people are not only victims of the current crises, but also provide central solutions. Safeguarding our interests must be the yardstick in negotiating the outcomes of CSD17.

Thank you very much for your attention.