

Indigenous Peoples Policy Paper for CSD-17 on

Agriculture, Land, Rural Development, Drought, Desertification, Water and Sanitation

A Human rights-based approach, when combined with an ecosystems approach, provide the underpinnings for sustainable development, including on the themes we are discussing today, of Agriculture, Land, Rural Development, Drought, Desertification, Water and Sanitation. Indigenous peoples put forward the following policy recommendations based on this framework for advancing social and ecological balance and equity:

AGRICULTURE

1. Sustainable development planning to uphold indigenous peoples' rights to lands, territories and resources, and to recognize and promote the contributions of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices
2. Revitalize and promote ecological agricultural approaches that allow indigenous peoples, local communities and small farmers to sustain and increase local food production with low-cost, readily available technologies and inputs without causing environmental destruction
3. Promote traditional knowledge, innovations and practices such as seed banking, propagation and sharing of seed varieties, breeds and locally generated technologies
4. Recognize the substantial contributions of indigenous peoples' customary natural resource management and agroforestry practices to climate change mitigation and adaptation; and support community-based practices and adaptive management as invaluable responses to food security, food sovereignty and climate change

LAND

5. Reform land laws and agrarian policies towards secure tenure and land rights for indigenous peoples and small farmer/tillers
6. Recognize the multiple environmental, social, cultural and spiritual values of land, sea and natural resources and the cosmovisions of indigenous peoples
7. Adopt trade policies that promote and sustain indigenous production and livelihoods in agro-forestry, livestock, marine and other traditional occupations and local, regional and national markets
8. Recognize the fundamental role of women in agriculture, sustainable natural resource use and management. Redistributive agrarian reforms must allow women access to and jurisdiction over land and natural resources and guarantee their representation in decision-making

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

9. Prioritize rural development programs aimed at ensuring rights to lands and food sovereignty of the small farmers and peoples over those aimed at natural resource extraction for commerce and profit
10. Recognize indigenous peoples "Life Plans" and Local Sustainable Development Plans which are based on participatory prioritization and decision-making, and resources management
11. Integrate Traditional Knowledge in rural development policies and interventions that facilitate the sustainable use of water, land, forest and fisheries resources and maintain biodiversity
12. Implement equitable and inclusive water resources management and address conflicting water uses and demands emerging especially from irrigated agriculture
13. Recognize and promote community-based extension that values and supports traditional knowledge systems and networks, with training of local farmer-to-farmer extension agents

DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION

14. Develop and implement drought mitigation strategies that identify the most vulnerable, determine the reasons for their vulnerability, prioritize factors that can be addressed in the short-, medium- and long-term, and integrate action into the broader development agenda.
15. Adopt a comprehensive land use involving carefully planned crop rotation that minimizes erosion and uses less water-dependent crops in drier months/years, conservation agriculture, rainwater harvesting, water recycling, appropriate water restrictions, cloud seeding, etc.
16. Provide support for the development and installation of simple local technologies such as those promoting shallow wells, subsurface dams, water harvesting techniques, for the access of water for domestic consumption and hygiene, and for economic activities such as livestock raising, brick making or small-scale agricultural activities.
17. Adopt policies that value the importance of drylands in economic, environmental, social, cultural and political terms, and respect for the tenure rights and other rights of livestock keepers and pastoralists.
18. Recognise and promote traditional knowledge in combatting desertification
19. Support traditional knowledge, innovations and improvement of production systems adapted to climate stress such as pastoralism

WATER AND SANITATION

20. Recognize and promote the indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge systems and innovations in the collective management and conservation of their water resources

21. Recognize the vital role of indigenous peoples in sustaining the forests and watersheds and provide support systems, incentives and just payments for environmental services to the rightful protectors of natural resources, biodiversity, forests and watersheds
22. Address and prevent the destruction of natural habitats and ecosystems, pollutions in land and waters, depletion of water sources due to extractive industries such as mining and large dams; and establish measures to sanction the violators
23. Prioritize programs and projects on water for livelihoods, and domestic use, health and sanitation of local communities