



PRESS CONFERENCE WITH INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY

Speakers: Ramiro Batzin, Guatemala (LAC); Lucy Mullenkei, Kenya (Africa); Lakpa Nuri Sherpa, Nepal (Asia); Viacheslav Shadrin, Russia (Russia / Arctic); Ruth V. Spencer, Antigua and Barbuda (LAC); Aslak Holmberg, Finland (Europe / Arctic); Chrissy Grant, Australia (Pacific).

Date: 7 December 2022, 14:00 Eastern Standard Time | **Place:** Room **220D**, Palais des Congres, Montreal, Canada | **Online at:** www.cbd.int/live

Contact: Alice Mathew (ecila.mathew@gmail.com); Tom Dixon (tdixon@forestpeoples.org); WA: +44 7876 397915)

PRESS RELEASE: There can be no agreement to save nature without inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

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The global biodiversity framework to save nature must respect, promote and support the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities if it stands any chance of succeeding. In this press briefing at the opening of COP15, members of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) will discuss the position of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities on the Global Biodiversity Framework.

“As global citizens, we are all part of, and not separate from, nature,” said Lakpa Nuri Sherpa, one of the Co-Chairs of the IIFB, and programme lead at AIPP (Asia), speaking at the opening of UN Biodiversity’s COP15.

“As Indigenous Peoples, we have been custodians of our lands, territories and waters for millennia and have deep interaction with the ecosystems where we live. Evidence shows our lands are among the most biodiverse on the planet,” he said.

For example, a recent IPBES sustainability report released in 2022, found that policies supporting secure tenure rights for indigenous peoples, and equitable access to land, fisheries and forests, as well as poverty alleviation, create enabling conditions for sustainable use of wild species.

“Only by recognizing the rights, knowledge, innovations, and values of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities will we be able to push forward the global agenda to sustainably use and conserve biodiversity,” said Nuri.

The Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) begins on 7 December in Montreal. This is a crucial year as the aim of COP15 is to finalise and adopt the Post-



2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), which will set the global targets for living in harmony with nature and mitigating biodiversity loss.

Ramiro Batzin, co-chair of the IIFB, and representing Latin America, said “by respecting the territoriality of Indigenous Peoples, respecting our knowledge and our contributions, the Global Biodiversity Framework – including targets to ensure humanity lives in harmony with nature – will succeed!”

The implementation of the framework to save nature should follow a human rights-based approach respecting, protecting and fulfilling these rights, and particularly indigenous and collective rights, and gender equity.

“A human rights-based approach is crucial to a successful Global Biodiversity Framework,” said Lucy Mulenkei, Co-Chair of the IIFB, Africa. “Recognition and respect of the rights of the communities is crucial.”

“Such an approach would mean that biodiversity policies, governance and management do not violate human rights, and those implementing such policies should actively seek ways to support and promote human rights in their design and implementation,” she said.

In their opening statement to COP15, IIFB states that the implementation of the global biodiversity framework must be based on scientific and other evidence, recognizing the role of science, technology and innovation and that of other knowledge and innovation systems including traditional knowledge, practices, and technologies, while respecting the principles of free, prior and informed consent.

Yukon Regional Chief Kluane Adamek, head of the delegation from the Assembly of First Nations in Canada said, “We are part of the land and part of the water. Indigenous Peoples must be the ones to guide us forward in protecting, conserving, and stewarding our environment.”

She added, “First Nations women, who play a sacred role in their communities as caretakers of life on water and Mother Earth, matriarchs preserve and pass down critical knowledge about our natural world, and its protocols. Indigenous ways of knowing and being are essential to addressing biodiversity loss and must be recognized and protected.”

“Indigenous Peoples’ values and knowledge provide insights for reciprocal human-nature relationships amidst the crisis of biodiversity loss and climate change,” said Joji Carino, Philippines (Forest Peoples Programme / Indigenous and Local Knowledge Centres of Distinction / Member of IIFBES caucus), speaking at the meetings.

“Biodiversity needs the voices of Indigenous Peoples,” said Carino.

“Putting the cultures and rights of IPLCs at the heart of the Global Biodiversity Framework would deliver sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing, and positive outcomes for biodiversity and climate,” she said.

In a statement, the IIFB noted that ‘The implementation of the GBF must ensure that the rights, knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities are respected, preserved and maintained with their free, prior and informed consent, including through their full



and effective participation in decision-making in accordance with national legislation, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and international human rights instruments.’

We encourage all parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity to enshrine the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities within the GBF and adopt a framework that truly will allow humanity to live in harmony with nature by 2050.

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Further information

Spokespersons will be available for interview following the press briefing and throughout COP15. For information on event and for interviews with member of the IPLC Caucus, please contact:

- *Alice Mathew* (ecila.mathew@gmail.com)
- *Tom Dixon* (tdixon@forestpeoples.org)
- Web: <https://iifb-indigenous.org/>

For a full list of IIFB side events:

- [IIFB Side events at COP15](#)

Speakers list

- Ramiro Batzin, IIFB & Sotzil, Guatemala (LAC)
- Lucy Mulenkei, IIFB & IWBNI, Indigenous Information Network, Kenya (Africa)
- Lakpa Nuri Sherpa, IIFB & Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, Nepal (Asia)
- Viacheslav Shadrin, Chief of the Yukaghir Council of Elders, of the Republic of Sakha-Yakutia, Arctic Russia (Russia / Arctic)
- Ruth V. Spencer, IIFB & Barnes Hill Community Development Organization BHCDO, Antigua and Barbuda (LAC)
- Aslak Holmberg, IIFB & Saami Council, Finland (Europe / Arctic)
- Chrissy Grant, Australia (Pacific)