



Rio Conventions Pavilion Bulletin

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RIO CONVENTIONS PAVILION HIGHLIGHTS: 3 DECEMBER 2015

The third day of the RCP convened on Thursday, 3 December, at UNFCCC COP21, under the theme “Day for indigenous peoples and local communities,” hosted by the UN Development Programme (UNDP). In the morning, participants took part in a session providing the outcomes of “local-national” dialogues on climate change. In the afternoon, the sessions addressed: local gender-responsive climate action; community responses in the face of armed conflict and illegal extractive industries; local actions for strengthening climate resilience; and, protected areas’ contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In the evening, a reception to meet the 2015 Equator Prize winners was held.

INDIGENOUS VOICES AND CLIMATE CHANGE: OUTCOMES OF NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES-GOVERNMENT DIALOGUES

Charles McNeill, UNDP, outlined the process of a series of national dialogues held between local communities and indigenous peoples, and their governments. He said the goal of these dialogues was to encourage inclusion of indigenous peoples’ voice in climate discussions.

Delfin Ganapin, Global Manager, GEF SGP, outlined that the support provided by the GEF SGP aims to “create a bridge” to link global climate discussions with local climate actions. He stressed that without “the bridge,” actions taken may be inappropriate or not happen at all.

Edward Porokwa, Pastoralists Indigenous Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Forum, Tanzania, provided feedback from dialogues held in Tanzania. He said that the main issues included the impact of climate change adaptation and mitigation



Tashka Yamanawa, Yamanawa Peoples, Brazil

strategies on indigenous peoples. Priority messages, Porokwa stated, were, *inter alia*, accepting and respecting indigenous peoples’ rights.

Lola Cabnal, Ak’ Tenamit, Guatemala, said that the Government of Guatemala has an inclusive regime that acknowledges indigenous peoples and their rights. She called for promoting development and adaptation, and recognizing and respecting indigenous peoples’ rights and practices.

Nathalie Flores Gonzales, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Dominican Republic, stated that as most of the Dominican Republic’s economy is dependent on agriculture and tourism, climate change is of great concern.



L-R: Edward Porokwa, Pastoralist Indigenous NGOs Forum, Tanzania; Kittisak Rattanakrajangsri, Indigenous Peoples’ Foundation for Education and Environment, Thailand; Nathalie Flores Gonzales, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Dominican Republic; Filifilia Iosefa, Indigenous Peoples’ delegation from the Pacific representing Samoa; and Lola Cabnal, Ak’ Tenamit

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She underscored that indigenous peoples want to support governments in their mitigation and adaptation actions, including on renewable energy projects.

Kittisak Rattanakrajangsri, Indigenous Peoples' Foundation for Education and Environment, Thailand, described a dialogue between indigenous peoples and government agencies, resulting in an increase in knowledge of the challenges indigenous peoples face. He noted collaborative efforts intended to develop Thailand's climate change adaptation plan jointly.

Andrew Bishop, Lead Climate Negotiator, Guyana, described legislation to protect indigenous peoples' rights. On climate change projects, he stated that indigenous peoples have contributed to Guyana's INDC, and described a partnership between Guyana and Norway to fund "homegrown" low-emissions projects.

Filifilia Iosefa, Indigenous Peoples Delegation of the Pacific, Samoa, described the Pacific Regional Dialogue held in October 2015, which centered on several themes, *inter alia*: climate change leadership and crafting a common voice; capacity building on climate change science and the negotiations process; and, communication strategies, including how to interact with media.

Acknowledging that climate change disproportionately impacts indigenous peoples, Hans Brattskar, Deputy Foreign Minister, Norway, recognized that indigenous peoples play a "critical role" in addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation. He affirmed Norway's "proud" support for the dialogues and the GEF SGP.

Duong Hoang Cong, Centre for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas (CSDM), Viet Nam, described a workshop that developed several key messages on the specific climate change challenges and needs facing indigenous peoples, including the need for capacity building and technology support.

Participant interventions and closing remarks highlighted traditional knowledge as fundamental capital for all of humanity. They addressed the potential impact of only including reference to indigenous peoples in the preamble of the Paris agreement. The need to grant land rights to indigenous peoples, and the importance of indigenous peoples working with government to address climate change was also touched on.



Allison Davis, Global Greengrants Fund

GENDER-SMART CLIMATE POLICY

Moderator Alejandra Pero, UNDP, introduced Verania Chao, UNDP, who provided opening remarks. Chao framed the session as focusing on how local-gender actions linked to climate change can be scaled up into gender equality and policy frameworks.

Nicolás Cartagena, Consejo Indígena del Pueblo Tacana, Bolivia, spoke on the experiences in his community, highlighting the important role women play in managing resources to increase community resilience. He underscored that a significant challenge is having the government respect the rights and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples.

Mahamat Ahmat Abbas, Association Tchadienne des Volontaires pour la Protection de l'Environnement (ATVPE), Chad, described his organization's work with poor, landless women, and the process of securing degraded land as a resource to lift women out of poverty through land restoration. These initiatives, he said, have empowered the women involved.

Maite Rodriguez, Huairou Commission, Guatemala, presented on work in Guatemala and Honduras to address climate change, build local resilience, and facilitate disaster risk reduction (DRR) in partnership with grassroots organizations. She outlined the important role of women, and referenced a community resilience fund to help scale up political advocacy efforts.

Titilope Akosa, GEF SGP Grantee, Nigeria, provided an example of working in a water-scarce community in Nigeria to improve rainfall-harvesting techniques through participatory community processes. She emphasized the role of women in this process, and the resulting health and livelihood benefits generated.

Allison Davis, Global Greengrants Fund, described her organization's approach to small grant distribution targeting "powerful" community-based solutions with an emphasis on bringing women's voices to the policy level.

Ana Maria Currea, GEF SGP, outlined the emphasis the GEF SGP places on empowering women, citing examples of gender mainstreaming and women-led projects. She underscored the importance of bringing women's voices to policy makers and allowing space for actors to talk and learn from each other to facilitate positive change.

In the ensuing discussion, participants highlighted a lack of resources to support platforms and mechanisms that encourage the participation of women. Other issues covered included collaborating with implementing agencies and changing social norms to increase the inclusion of women.



Andrew Bishop, Lead Climate Negotiator, Guyana



L-R: Voahanginanahary Rakotondrasoa and Rakotondramanga Rafanomezantsoa, Union Soamitamatra, Madagascar; Leana Corea and Modesto Ochoa, CODDEFFAGOLF, Honduras; Fatima Ahmed, Zenab for Women in Development, Sudan; Sirous Entekhabihassanlouei and Manizeh Hajighasemi, Umbrella Group of Naghadeh NGOs, Iran

COMMUNITY INNOVATION IN THE FACE OF CONFLICT: STORIES FROM THE 2015 EQUATOR PRIZE WINNERS

Jan Kellet, UNDP, moderated the session, underscoring the interactions between climate change and conflict.

Norvin Goff and Deborah Sanchez, Muskitia Asla Takanka (MASTA), Honduras, discussed challenges such as land grabbing, deforestation, and oil extraction. They emphasized a strategic focus on land and human rights, working with political powers through community consultations, and improving land tenure.

Haway Isak Ali, Oromia Pastoralist Association, Ethiopia, acknowledged increasing conflicts due to drought, and water and land scarcity. These, he stated, have restricted mobility, resulting in overgrazing and soil erosion. He described a cross-border peace-building process among pastoral communities in Ethiopia and Kenya, which undertook activities such as: inter-community dialogue and trust building; training on early warning and response systems; and a "peace directory" phonebook to resolve possible disputes.

Sopheak Phon and Sopheap Hoeun, Prey Lang Community Network, Cambodia, shared efforts of Kuy communities to protect 500,000 hectares in the Cambodian lowlands, describing an interactive mobile app, which uses text, images and voice recordings, enabling both literate and illiterate users to document, *inter alia*, forest crimes.

Farkhunda Ateel Seddiqi, Rural Green Environment Organization, Afghanistan, explained challenges of addressing climate change in a war zone. She emphasized the need to build trust among local commanders. She noted community-based adaptation efforts, which have decreased floods, reduced soil erosion, and greened an area of 1,500 square kilometers in 90 villages.

Hernando Chindoy, Wuasikamas, Colombia, shared the results of efforts by his community, the Aponte Inga, to exercise their sovereign rights on their ancestral territories and protect their local environment. He noted that the Government of Colombia had established a communal fund, in return for which the Aponte Inga rid the area of guerrillas and drug crops that had threatened local ecosystems and depleted soil fertility in the area. Maria Encarnación Janamejoy, closing the presentation on the Aponte Inga, stressed that "If we do not do the 'proper work,' we will not be able to protect the earth."

LOCAL ACTION ON RESILIENCE: LESSONS FROM THE 2015 EQUATOR PRIZE WINNERS

Jamison Ervin, UNDP, opened the session outlining seven principles for resilience as defined by the Stockholm Resilience Centre - diversity, connectivity, managing feedback loops, complex systems thinking, encouraging learning, broadening participation, and nested governance. She then invited the 2015 Equator Prize winners to share their respective stories related to the seven resilience principles.

Fatima Ahmed, Zenab for Women in Development, Sudan, described working with rural women farmers to improve their agriculture practices to be more resilient, productive, and sustainable, and build local community capacity.

Sirous Entekhabihassanlouei, Umbrella Group of Naghadeh NGOs, Iran, presented the process of establishing the work of the Umbrella Group, starting from figuring out why wetlands were drying up, to engaging local communities in wetland restoration and management. Manizeh Hajighasemi, involved in one of the NGOs under the Umbrella Group, gave examples of training and workshop initiatives targeting women on resource management, sustainable agricultural practices, and alternative livelihood supporting activities.

Rakotondramanga Rafanomezantsoa, and Voahanginanahary Jeanne D'Arc Victoria Rakotondrasoa, Union Soamitamatra, Madagascar, spoke on community management of forest and lake areas to improve livelihood opportunities and natural resource management. Rakotondrasoa described activities specifically targeted at increasing communities' resilience to climate change.

Leana Corea, Comité para la Defensa y Desarrollo de la Flora y Fauna del Golfo de Fonseca (CODDEFFAGOLF), Honduras, provided information on community activities to adapt to climate change. She described projects undertaken, including one to adapt to warmer waters by establishing artificial coral reefs to encourage fish spawning, which had



Fatima Ahmed, Zenab for Women in Development, Sudan



Maria Leusa Munduruku, Movimento Ipereg Ayu, Brazil

rejuvenated the local fishing industry. She underscored that a key to the success of these projects is to “ensure they have net-positive benefits” for local communities. Modesto Choa, CODDEFFAGOLF, described awareness raising efforts, underscoring that the Government of Honduras has recognized how these activities have supported local industries.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF PROTECTED AREAS TO CLIMATE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

Terence Hay-Edie, GEF SGP, moderated the session, describing how protected areas and indigenous peoples’ and local community conserved areas and territories contribute to addressing climate change, including through enhancing carbon sequestration, mitigating storm impacts, maintaining water and food security, and protecting vulnerable species.

Pagi Toko, Wananag Conservation Area, Papua New Guinea, described a village-based protected area, supported by ten clan leaders, to conserve *circa* 10,000 hectares of lowland rainforest. Noting that logging concessions dominate, he lauded initiative leader Filip Damen’s efforts to secure forest protection, and highlighted how the local community has come to understand the forest’s global significance.

Revocatus Wilbard Njau, MJUMITA, Tanzania, described his organization, saying that it has helped to ensure communities use their forest resources sustainably.

Nicholas Fredericks, South Central People’s Development Association (SCPDA), Guyana, said his community decided to establish the Wapichan Conserved Forest, to protect against pollution and food insecurity from mining and logging concessions, underscoring that only a small proportion of the land tenure for this area is secure. He noted future action includes securing legal title for the remaining territory and conserved areas.

Budi Setiawan, Kelompok Peduli Lingkungan Belitung, Indonesia, highlighted his organization’s work with local communities to ensure that they benefit from protecting their local environment. He said that a number of ecotourism activities have been established, including ecolodges, that would benefit from protected areas.

The ensuing question and answer session on protected areas discussed: protecting the rights of the indigenous peoples and local communities living in them; if communities or governments are better placed to manage them; protecting and transferring traditional knowledge; and, whether to endorse them at the community level.

RECEPTION: MEET THE 2015 EQUATOR PRIZE WINNERS

Charles McNeill outlined the important roles indigenous peoples and local communities play in protecting and managing land and forests, and contributing towards climate change mitigation and adaptation. He then introduced three of the 21 winners of the 2015 Equator Prize, who shared their experiences. This was followed by a reception.

Mugabe Gregory, Kayonza Growers Tea Factory, Uganda, described a tea farming community’s initiatives to address climate change, focusing on food security, nature conservation, family planning, and water conservation.

Xiaogang Yu, Yunnan Green Watershed Management Research and Promotion Center, China, spoke on initiatives promoting sustainable development and indigenous peoples’ resource rights by engaging local communities and encouraging policy dialogue within China and Southeast Asia more broadly. Min Sun, Yunnan Green Watershed Management Research and Promotion Center, China, described addressing climate change through natural resource management activities, which also increased villages’ income at least ten-fold.

Maria Leusa Munduruku, Movimento Ipereg Ayu, Brazil, called on participants to join the struggle of the Munduruku Amazon people in protecting their forests and lands being threatened by private companies and the Government of Brazil’s plans to dam the Tapajós River. Stating, “We will guarantee the life of the forest,” she urged the global community to ensure the Munduruku people’s rights are protected.



Charles McNeill, UNDP, outlined the important roles indigenous peoples and local communities play in protecting land and forests