



**Summit Muchtanbal  
on Indigenous Experience:  
Traditional Knowledge and  
Biological and Cultural Diversity**

*Mainstreaming the contribution of Traditional Knowledge, Innovations and Practices across  
Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Tourism Sectors for the conservation and sustainable use of  
Biodiversity for Well-being*

*9 to 11 December 2016*

**DECLARATION**

We, the participants of the **Múuch'tambal Summit** held in Cancun, Mexico, territory of Indigenous Peoples since millennia and rich in biological and cultural diversity:

1. *Welcome* this opportunity to share experiences from indigenous peoples and local communities, Parties and International Organizations on the contributions of traditional knowledge and cultural diversity across the Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Tourism sectors for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
2. *Recognize* that many countries with the highest levels of biological diversity also rank amongst the most culturally diverse. Cultural diversity and its corresponding traditional knowledge are eroding fast in many parts of the world, and these losses are closely linked to the loss of biological diversity. There is an urgent need to reverse this trend to ensure critical pathways towards future sustainability on Earth;
3. *Fully Endorse* the recommended actions at various levels as presented in the Annex of this Declaration with the aim of contributing to all of the Aichi Targets of the CBD, in particular enhancing protection, conservation and customary sustainable use of biodiversity for local and traditional livelihoods and the equal sharing of the benefits arising from the use of traditional knowledge and biodiversity;
4. *Acknowledge* the ownership of indigenous peoples' lands and territories and the inseparable linkages between indigenous and communal land tenure systems and customary use of biological and cultural diversity. We underline the importance of this to the well-being of indigenous peoples;
5. *Recognize* the contribution and values of traditional knowledge and biological and cultural diversity to healthy ecosystems, human well-being and resilient and sustainable societies, particularly in the agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and tourism sectors;
6. *Acknowledge* the important role indigenous peoples and local communities play in the governance, management and conservation of biodiversity, and the importance of protecting traditional knowledge and its continued transmission to future generations through their own institutions;
7. *Promote* the full and effective exercise of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities enshrined in the various international instruments related to the protection of Mother Earth, without fear of retribution;

8. *Encourage* the balanced, fair, and effective intellectual property protections of genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions;
9. *Acknowledge* the role of indigenous women and youth in caring for biodiversity and cultural diversity as women represent fertility of Mother Earth and the youth are our next generation and future,
10. *Recognize* the critical role that traditional knowledge and biocultural diversity plays in achieving sustainable development and in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals;
11. *Acknowledge* the importance of the UNESCO-SCBD Joint Programme on the Links between Biological and Cultural Diversity in advancing our understanding of and attention to the biocultural diversity as the complex interplay between biodiversity and cultural diversity, and its vital impacts on economic, political, environmental, social and cultural sustainability;
12. *Recognize* the importance of enhancing mechanisms for the incorporation of approaches that build on traditional knowledge, innovations and practices and biocultural diversity with full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans of the CBD;
13. *Commit* to disseminate locally, nationally and globally the outcomes of the Summit, including at the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 13), while requesting consideration by Parties, Governments and International organizations of financial support of the proposed actions;
14. *Encourage* further elaboration and dissemination of case studies, policies and concepts presented at the Summit through mutual learning platforms such as the Joint Programme of Work between the CBD and UNESCO on the Links between Biological and Cultural Diversity;
15. *Welcome* the Local Biodiversity Outlooks Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' contributions to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020" as a complement to the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook;
16. *Encourage* the continued exchange and distribution of best practices through diverse platforms such as the Local Biodiversity Outlooks webpage, and the further exploration of how to strengthen the synergies between the protection of traditional knowledge and biocultural diversity for the implementation of the Convention, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi targets, as well as the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 1, indicator 5, regarding the percentage of women, men, indigenous peoples and local communities with secure rights to land;
17. *Invite* the United Nations Member States, in partnership with the Secretariats of the CBD, UNESCO, UNU, FAO and WIPO to consider and support the spirit and initiatives of this Declaration and its Annex;
18. *Welcome* the commitments made in the Cancun Declaration on Mainstreaming the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity For Well-Being, which will be made possible through the implementation and compliance of the actions proposed in this Declaration and its Annex.

## Annex

*The Múuch'tambal Summit encourages the following actions at relevant local, national, and international levels to strengthen the links between biological and cultural diversity for a sustainable future*

### International Level

- a. Ensure full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in all international processes that are of importance for the protection of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, and the protection and promotion of biodiversity and cultural diversity;
- b. Reinforce synergies between Conventions and International Protocols to maintain and strengthen the linkages between traditional knowledge and biological and cultural diversity for the benefit of sustainable development;
- c. Develop sui generis systems for protection of traditional knowledge;
- d. Take action on the recommendations from the Global Consultations on Farmers Rights, held in Bali in September 2016, under the International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;
- e. Take action on and continue the development of the Rutzolijirisaxik guidelines on the repatriation of traditional knowledge while recognizing that holistic repatriation efforts require strengthening the linkages between UNESCO, CBD and other UN bodies;
- f. Continue to support and implement the CBD Capacity Building Program on traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, and customary sustainable use.

### National Level

- a. Ensure full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the update and implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs);
- b. Implement the CBD Global Plan of Action on Customary Sustainable Use as part of the NBSAPs;
- c. Ensure the effective implementation of relevant international and regional agreements at the national level such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP);
- d. Strengthen the important role of indigenous women and youth in the upholding of the linkages between biological and cultural diversity, and the related traditional knowledge;
- e. Ensure the protection of the collective actions of indigenous peoples and local communities, traditional and communal land and water tenure systems, resource rights, customary laws, and resource management in order to promote and preserve biological and cultural diversity, including agricultural diversity in traditional crops and livestock breeds;
- f. Take action in current rural and environmental policies to incorporate both biological and cultural diversity, while drawing upon the synergies emerging from the links between them;
- g. Recognize and ensure that constitutional, statutory, and regulatory frameworks do not run counter to sustainable local livelihoods dependent on biocultural diversity;
- h. Recognize and protect sacred sites as they play an important role in local regeneration and culture;
- i. Provide small grants and incentives for local biocultural diversity initiatives, including the exchanges of traditional knowledge;
- j. Recognize and promote best practices in local governance and the preservation and promotion of the linkages of biological and cultural diversity, while providing resources to implement, up-scale and replicate where appropriate;
- k. Build capacity to develop and implement curricula that respects and recognize indigenous and traditional and local cultures and livelihoods;
- l. Provide comprehensive support for agriculture, forestry, fishery, and tourism sectors to create cross-sectorial initiatives to promote the continued contribution coming out of the synergistic links between biological and cultural diversity for resilient and sustainable land and seascapes;
- m. Encourage trans-disciplinary, collaborative research, and the co-production of knowledge on equal terms across knowledge systems in support of the benefits derived from biological and cultural diversity and its implications on policymaking.

## **Local Level**

- a. Recognize, promote and where appropriate scale up and replicate best practices based on traditional knowledge and biological and cultural diversity;
- b. Establish bottom-up approaches in policy and decision making and in legislative processes relevant to traditional knowledge, customary sustainable use, and biological and cultural diversity;
- c. Empower indigenous peoples and local communities to continue the revival, innovation, and transmission of their traditional languages and knowledge and cultural practices to the benefit our collective resilient and sustainable future on Mother Earth.