



Second meeting Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information (DSI) on Genetic Resources (WGDSI-2)
12-16 August 2024, Montreal, Canada

AGENDA ITEM 3: Further development of the multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources, including a global fund

DATE: 12 AGOSTO 2024

Statement on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) and the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWBN) delivered by: Kuni Albert of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN)

I speak on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) and the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWBN). We pay our respects to the Mohawk Indigenous Peoples and their traditional lands on which we stand.

We congratulate Ms. Astrid Schomaker as the new Executive Secretary.

We thank the governments that support the Voluntary Fund mechanism which supports the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The IIFB highlights the document **2/2/Add.1**, and presents the following as the basis for this week's work:

- The multilateral mechanism (MLM) must respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities over their traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, including with respect to species or places considered as sacred.
- Monetary and non-monetary benefits should be used to fulfil the goals of the convention and the Nagoya Protocol for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and benefit Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and
- A proportion of the funding should be set aside for direct access by Indigenous Peoples and local communities. The IPBES and other studies provide evidence that IPLCs overlap higher proportions of biodiversity, and the global average hides that it can be extremely high. Funding sufficient to address the needs of IPLCs should be provided.

Based on these points:

- The multilateral mechanism must acknowledge the unique relationship that Indigenous Peoples and local communities have with biodiversity and their roles as stewards of biodiversity on the ground.



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- No trigger point affects the ongoing moral and legal obligation of all users to engage meaningfully and responsibly with IPLCs. In accordance with the Nagoya Protocol, genetic resources from Indigenous territories, lands and waters should never be collected, sequenced, or uploaded to any database without their Free, Prior and Informed Consent; or used from existing databases without respect for rights and interests of IPLCs.
- Measures should be provided to ensure the association of meaningful provenance data and metadata with sequence data, including the use of traditional knowledge and biocultural labelling. Data management must be in line with principles of Open and Responsible data governance, including the widely recognised FAIR and CARE principles. This is needed to create conditions for trust.
- All use of DSI, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, must result in equitable benefit sharing. Sharing of benefits reflects the reality that the value chain of DSI begins not with the use of a sequence, but with the protection of biodiversity and its stewards.
- Funding should be provided and distributed through direct access and priorities set by Indigenous Peoples and local communities. It has to be provided by an international entity or UN Body that applies a non-discriminatory approach, and takes on a holistic and equitable approach to IPLCs from all seven (7) socio-cultural regions, recognizing and respecting the equal rights to funding of IPLCs from developed and developing countries.
- In order to operationalise distribution and allocation of funds to IPLCs, strategies are necessary to ensure their active participation, transparency and equity, taking into account the lived realities and the local capacity of these communities.
- The governance system must be inclusive, where IPLCs have direct representation in decision-making on the distribution of funds. Observer status alone does not grant sufficient representation.

The IIFB will provide concrete text proposal during contact group sessions.

Thank you, Chair.