

Introduction

US Indigenous Elder sang an opening song of thanks to water as the source of life setting a positive respectful tone for the meeting. UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinoza said words of welcome: The Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples (LCIP) platform is meant to share best practices. This workshop should help with establishment of a facilitative working group and develop modalities for a work plan that will accomplish the three goals of sharing knowledge, building capacity for engagement, and ensuring policy coherence. Underlining the urgency of the task – 2018 most costly year for disaster consequences. Increase ambition, action and investment. Need to hear Indigenous voices, mobilize each and every person to join journey for a better world.

Speaker on behalf of the LCIP – why are we here. Political achievements – dynamic friendships and partnerships. Meant to be dialogue.

UNFCCC Secretariat provided background on COP 23 decision, functions and mandate and next steps. The three functions are interrelated: (1) Sharing knowledge means exchange of experience and best practices to preserve and protect Indigenous knowledge and technology, taking into account FPIC of holders of knowledge; (2) Implementing functional capacity for engagement – enable LCIP to participate in climate change discussions, Paris Agreement and other climate change processes; and (3) Ensuring policy coherence should facilitate diverse knowledge systems and respect and promote rights of LCIP, contributing to the NDCs.

Inuit Circumpolar Council: noted with approval the positive formation of the LCIP platform - based on UNDRIP and decision text- full representation, equal status, self-selection of representation, adequate funding.

Co-facilitators: The LCIP platform is within UNFCCC framework. Facilitative dialogue is not an official negotiation. It will lead to development of representations to COP24.

Long term vision – encouraged participants to speak and pose questions on the on line system – congratulated participants for being here, establishing the platform and organizing this.

One introductory intervention explained how there was a solid basis for including Indigenous peoples in negotiations for climate change, referring to inter alia the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, ILO Convention 169, UNDHR, ICCPR, ICESCR to explain that self-determination is a right of all peoples, that all peoples are entitled to equality and nondiscrimination, and that indigenous peoples are entitled to make decisions based on free, prior and informed consent.

After the introductory presentations, there was an intervention to say that this is still a state-run process, we are still talking about themes since Paris but now have to take action to begin the work of the working group. He urged beginning the process of developing recommendations for the COP.

Canadian delegation- congratulates organizers on set up of this workshop – strengthening dialogue with Indigenous peoples is a priority for Canada – familiar faces, informal dialogue, building relationships.

Bolivian representative – establishment of an Indigenous platform – working with mother earth. Interdependency of Indigenous knowledge and protection of nature.

Session 1 Sharing Knowledge

UNESCO – sharing information about African pastoralists; connecting Indigenous and scientific knowledge. 3-year project mapping climate change – six seasons; types of rain; behavior of animals – Indigenous and scientific knowledge and forecasting can be quite complimentary. Need a place where we can get the best available knowledge.

Representative of African Indigenous peoples – traditional knowledge – Morocco – unique forest with different plants, best practices, important role of women in preserving traditional knowledge. It is important that best practices not disappear. Traditional knowledge is linked to languages of Indigenous peoples, but they lose their languages and through this lose their knowledge – need to protect languages.

Human rights and Indigenous peoples' rights have to be embedded in this process.

Commentators reiterated the importance of including women in the platform because they play such an important role in preserving traditional knowledge and they experience climate change in specific ways.

It was pointed out that Indigenous knowledge is not historic or static but continues to evolve. Need to address the repression of Indigenous peoples who try to protect land and natural resources. The question was posed, how do we review policies and practices that undermine Indigenous knowledge?

Session 2 Implementing functional capacity for engagement

Questions were posed about how Indigenous peoples and local communities can participate directly in the platform given their linguistic, cultural and economic challenges. It was recognized that funding needs to be provided to facilitate participation and to develop creative education tools to reach out to LCIPs and promote sharing of best practices and experiences in dealing with climate change issues.

OHCHR: Human Rights Council has found a rights-based approach to climate change action; right to self-determination; decision making processes, within international realm, right to participate, ways and means to participate in UN system.

Session 3 Ensuring policy coherence

Questions were posed as to how to ensure traditional knowledge and the experience of LCIP are integrated into climate action by national and local governments as well as decision-making at the international level. It was noted that the LCIP platform will not address all issues faced by LCIP but is focused on climate change related issues; it should facilitate sharing of diverse knowledge systems and promotion of respect for rights of LCIP, contributing effectively to achieving the NDCs.

Various examples were given to illustrate the importance of traditional knowledge and Indigenous perspectives in understanding climate change and climate action. An emerging “best practice” was described: Pan Canadian framework on Climate Change and three new tables to include Indigenous peoples in these tables; self-selection of representation; two-way listening; coordinate engagement,

align across 19 federal ministries dealing with Climate change. Metis representative explains that the platform provides opportunities to meet directly with the minister of the environment and to provide input.

Summary

Overall, the workshop discussion was very positive, open and collaborative. Expectations seem strong but realistic, considering significant challenges facing local communities and Indigenous peoples in dealing with climate change and protecting their traditional knowledge.