

International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, Opening Statement

OEWG-4, 21-26 June, 2022, Nairobi, Kenya

Thank you, Mr/Ms Chair

I speak on behalf of the International Indigenous forum on Biodiversity (IIFB). We pay our respects to the Maasai Indigenous peoples and their traditional lands on which we stand. We condemn the catastrophic situation confronting the Maasai community in Loliondo, Tanzania who today are being violently displaced in a conservation area, for the interests of hunting business. This is just one example of the increase in systematic repression and criminalisation, and we condemn the forced evictions against Indigenous Peoples from their traditional territories. It is urgent that these events stop.

This example of gross human rights violations of Indigenous Peoples rights, in pursuit of profits and in the name of conservation is at the core of our ongoing post 2020 GBF negotiations. Can governments in this room commit to healing relationships with our planet together with the world's Indigenous Peoples and local communities?

IIFB maintains that the recognition of IPLC's rights and responsibilities to their land, territories and resources is essential in the development of a transformative framework and its effective implementation. This means explicit references to traditional territories, customary land tenure, customary sustainable use, equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms, free prior and informed consent in establishing conservation areas and in access to and the sharing of traditional knowledge and full, effective and equitable participation in decision-making.

IIFB urges Parties to fully embed Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities as vital actors and partners in the Goals and Target of the post-2020 GBF, as well as in NBSAPs planning, monitoring and review.

We remind parties of the robust conclusions of IPBES that our lands contribute to the conservation of biodiversity at the same scale and in some cases exceed the contributions from protected areas, and are necessary to the achievement of the post-2020 goals and targets. We therefore call for a mechanism for open and direct access to funding for Indigenous Peoples and local communities for the implementation of the post-2020 GBF from all seven socio-cultural regions.

Finally, we are concerned about the problems encountered by many delegates, including indigenous representatives, regarding their participation in this meeting. Even for the few of us who made it here, we are confronted with challenges to effectively and fully participate in the discussions due to the badge restrictions. We hope that the issues will be remedied soon.

Thank you Mr/Ms Chair