



**United
Nations**

**UNPFII
Recommendations Database**

Addressee: Economic and Social Council, UN system, UNFCCC, Convention to Combat Desertification

Paragraph #61 Session #2 (2003)

Full Text

The Forum recommends to the Economic and Social Council that the United Nations system guarantee the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in appropriate processes and environmental conventions, such as those on desertification, wetlands and climate change.

Comments

The Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) has reported that the Conference of the Parties has not responded to general recommendations made by the UNPFII to the United Nations system. However, noting that regular recommendations have been made by the UNPFII, concerning the effective participation of indigenous peoples in matters that affect them, the Conference of the Parties at its eight meeting adopted enhanced participation mechanisms and measures to assist the effective participation of indigenous and local communities in the development of an international regime on access and benefit sharing of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

It is also important to note and is an indication of the importance placed on the implementation of Article 8(j) and the effective participation of indigenous and local communities, that the Convention is the only multilateral environmental agreement with two full-time positions in its Secretariat exclusively focused on traditional knowledge and its role in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

At its eighth meeting, held in Curitiba, Brazil, in March this year, the Conference of the Parties became the first governing body of a multilateral environmental agreement to establish a voluntary funding mechanism specifically for the participation of indigenous and local communities in meetings held under the Convention. In recognition of the diversity of indigenous and local communities, the Conference of the Parties also established separate categories of accreditation for indigenous communities and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles.

The eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties attracted large numbers of participants from indigenous and local communities, and more than 1,000 non governmental organizations participated, including 348 indigenous organizations. Outside of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Convention hosts one of the largest gatherings of indigenous and local communities within the international system, which is further testimony to the high priority given by indigenous and local communities' to participation in the work of the Convention.

Area of Work

Environment