



COP30 FOREST PAVILION:

A Shared Commitment to Our Planet

2025 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP30)

10-21 November 2025, Belém, Brazil

Upholding the Role of Indigenous Peoples in Forest Stewardship: Access to Tools and Direct Funding Mechanisms

12 November – 10:00 - 12:00 PM

Lead: Forest Stewardship Council Indigenous Foundation

Format: In person

Concept Note

I. Background

Indigenous Peoples are among the world's most effective stewards of forests and biodiversity, especially when their rights are recognized and supported. As biodiversity declines globally, so too does cultural and linguistic diversity. Protecting forests and the cultural diversity rooted in those landscapes is critical for the future of our planet. Promoting Indigenous rights and the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and their valuable knowledge in biodiversity management and decision-making is essential for achieving a successful global biodiversity framework. Let's learn how to live in peace with nature from the world's best biodiversity stewards.

Indigenous Peoples manage approximately 25% of the Earth's surface, areas that are rich in biodiversity and contain 36% of the world's intact forests. These territories have the potential to contribute up to 37% of global CO2 mitigation by 2030, highlighting the essential role Indigenous Peoples play in tackling the climate crisis. However, their rights must be fully recognized and supported to unlock their full potential for climate solutions.

At COP30, the global community must take decisive action to support the rights, self-development, and self-reliance of Indigenous Peoples. When Indigenous Peoples' rights are respected, their ecological knowledge can effectively guide sustainable resource management for future generations. As stakeholders gather in solidarity for a green world, we affirm that a truly sustainable future is one shaped with Indigenous Peoples—and together, we can make this vision a reality.

II. Objectives

Indigenous Peoples, we are not only among the first to be impacted by environmental degradation but we are also uniquely positioned as guardians of biodiversity and key agents in the fight against

deforestation. Our voices and leadership must be amplified to ensure that decision-making processes genuinely reflect free, prior and informed consent and active co-shaping of outcomes.

COP30, hosted in the heart of the Amazonian rainforest in Belém, will be a critical platform to showcase our successes, express our needs, and highlight our vital contributions to forest stewardship.

The specific objectives of the event are to:

1. Celebrating victories and affirming commitments to address challenges.
Indigenous Peoples will share their stories of forest stewardship – challenges, opportunities and victories. This will be a space for sharing stories from the forests. We aim to share both our successes and the challenges we face in safeguarding forests and forest-dependent cultures, and to call for the support and resources we need to continue this vital work. As we approach COP30, we invite solidarity and partnership to strengthen our collective capacity to protect these ecosystems for the benefit of all.
2. Building partnerships based on respect and equity

Hear from Partners their own challenges, successes and ways forward in working with Indigenous Peoples. We will hear from partners and allies about their own experiences and together be inspired to scale up the successes we have achieved.
3. Explore tools to enhance sustainable forest stewardship
Partners will share tools that have been developed that support Indigenous Peoples in their stewardship roles.

III. Programme/Schedules of Events/Speakers

120 minutes – Panel and Interactive Discussion

Language: English only

Moderator:

Maria de Leon, Forest Stewardship Council Indigenous Foundation (FSC-IF)

Speakers:

1. Minnie Degawan, Managing Director for FSC-IF
2. Nonette Royo, Executive Director, The Tenure Facility
3. Albert Barume, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
4. Funding entity (tbc)
5. An Indigenous leader from South Central America
6. An Indigenous leader from Africa
7. International Land Coalition to share the LandMark Platform as a tool for elevating the role of Indigenous Peoples

IV. Expected main messages

Affirming Our Role as Guardians:

We seek to affirm our vital role as guardians of forests and biodiversity, sharing our traditional knowledge and leadership in protecting the Earth's ecosystems. Our deep connection to the land and our time-honored practices are essential for sustaining biodiversity and ensuring the health of our planet for future generations.

Ensuring Our Voices Shape Decisions:

We call for our voices to be genuinely heard and respected in all decision-making processes. It is essential that mechanisms for prior informed consent and active participation are upheld, so that policies affecting our forest territories, lands, and communities are co-created with us, reflecting our perspectives, rights, and aspirations.

Sharing Our Successes and Challenges:

We aim to share both our successes and the challenges we face in safeguarding forests, and to call for the support and resources we need to continue this vital work. As we approach COP30, we invite solidarity and partnership to strengthen our collective capacity to protect these ecosystems for the benefit of all.

V. Focal Point/Contact

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