

Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin and the COP26 Outcomes

Despite the reality that the Amazon is at a dangerous point of no return, despite the urgency of taking action to mitigate climate change at a global level, and despite the many travel restrictions, we, the indigenous peoples of the Amazon Basin, participated in greater numbers than ever before and forcefully raised our voices to present the demands and proposals of our territories at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, from 1 to 12 November 2021.

New scientific research indicates that severe deforestation and degradation have already affected 22% of the Amazon Basin¹. Therefore, the need to protect it is of utmost urgency, as in a few years it is possible that the Amazon Basin, as we know it today, will cease to exist. In this context, the delegation of the Coordinator of Indigenous Organisations of the Amazon Basin (COICA) jointly called upon governments and private funders, via various forums at COP26, to support the “Amazon 80 x 25 Initiative”, to ensure the protection and recovery of 80% of the world's largest tropical forest by 2025, as an urgent measure to halt the current climate crisis.

In order to achieve the Amazonian goal, minimum commitments will include: the legal recognition and demarcation of 100% of indigenous lands, and the allocation of permanent financial resources to enable them to be titled and expanded; the restoration of at least half of degraded forest areas; and a halt to industrial activities to cease the extraction of fossil fuels by 2025.

However, even though COP26 saw the creation of important cooperation links, the recognition of the leading role of indigenous peoples in the protection of nature and the commitment to double the funds for developing countries to adapt to climate change, the actions defined by the 197 countries who signed the Glasgow Climate Pact are insufficient considering the current climate emergency. The final document shows a lack of political will from the most industrialised and polluting countries for a real energy transition, as they failed to approve the elimination of the use of coal, fossil fuels and subsidies for their production, despite the fact that coal has been identified as the main source of global warming.

Furthermore, enticing announcements were made - such as the one by the United Kingdom, Norway, Germany, the US, the Netherlands, and private donors, who pledged \$1.7 billion to support the protection of indigenous territories over the next four years - in order to halt the climate crisis. However, there are no guarantees that funding mechanisms will be in place to ensure that the financial resources reach the territories directly, as historically, projects for the conservation and protection of the environment have not had any real results, and indigenous peoples have witnessed that climate commitments have remained only in words and on paper.

In this context, COICA and its member organisations in the nine countries of the Amazon Basin, **HEREBY AGREE:**

- To **lead and deliver** a strong global campaign to protect 80% of the Amazon by 2025 as an urgent measure to confront the current climate crisis, based on the principles set out in Motion 129, **approved by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).**

¹ Summary of Key Results Amazon for Life: protect 80% by 2025, research conducted by the Amazonian Network of Geo-referenced Socio-environmental Information (RAISG), 2021. Available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O10FEHEsMDBVorJHZ2S8P2cJSIpU7yVX/view?usp=sharing>



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- To **manage** and **coordinate** direct funding mechanisms for indigenous peoples through the 80 x 25 Initiative, as a practical measure to ensure that funds directly reach those of us who inhabit and defend the territories, and as key players with the capacity to offer viable and effective solutions for the protection of nature and the mitigation of climate change.
- To **urge** the governments of the Amazon Basin to recognise indigenous peoples' contributions to the nationally determined contributions (indigenous NDCs) as a strategy to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change; bearing in mind that the carbon stock of forests in indigenous territories and their contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions are not the result of the application of public government environmental policies, but of collective territorial management, based on the traditions and ancestral wisdom of indigenous peoples.
- To **remain alert, vigilant** and **monitor** the agreements set out in the Glasgow Climate Pact, in order to acknowledge the efforts or condemn the inaction that will be evident in the near future of the planet.

It has already been 27 years since the countries who signed the United Nations Conventions on Climate Change have been meeting to define global agreements on emission reduction targets, but the climate goals have not been met. The climate crisis is only getting worse, causing more and more losses, damage, and social, economic, and environmental threats. Faced with this situation, it is necessary to ask: Who is responsible for this damage? Who is responsible for the consequences of a reality that puts the survival of humanity at risk?

It is time to end the hypocrisy and doublespeak. The governments of the Amazon basin commit themselves at international events to work towards mitigating climate change, but at the same time they pass laws that invade our territories and violate our rights by developing extractive projects. It is time that, once and for all, developed countries, financial institutions, the United Nations, governmental and non-governmental organisations work together with indigenous peoples and organisations to turn the commitments they have made into action in order to meet climate goals and guarantee the protection of the Amazon. Our planet cannot survive without the Amazon.

A living Amazon ensures humanity's survival.

01th December 2021.

With kind regards,

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