



SBSTTA 22

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Agenda Item 10 of the provisional agenda

### **Invasive alien species**

The International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the document for this agenda item and also thank the CBD for assisting IPLC representation at the Expert Group meeting on Invasive Alien Species last December.

The IIFB would like to provide some context for the suggested changes in the Suggested Recommendations. We welcome the content of the Annex and would like to highlight that for some Indigenous peoples and local communities, particularly in rural and remote areas, now rely on some species of invasive alien species as part of their food sources. This is because of the decline or depletion of some of their traditional species which has been their staple food source for countless generations. It is with this in mind that the management and monitoring of invasive alien species should have the full and effective participation of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

An example is where Australia has many introduced species on our lands and in our waters that have become a national problem with the dramatic increase in numbers of rabbits, goat, camels, donkeys, toads and the domestic cats, all introduced species. Cats in particular, have had a major impact on the decline of the native species, particularly the bird and lizard species.

On the other hand, some Indigenous communities now rely on some of these species as their food sources with the depletion and decline of native species. There is also a commercial industry for the rabbit fur and meats of rabbits, camels and goats in the food industry. In these cases, invasive alien species control measures can be detrimental as some invasive alien species are now woven into the economies and the cultural values of Indigenous peoples and local communities as totems and 'dreaming stories' where those communities of Indigenous peoples and local communities are bound to protect those species.

Therefore, while the impact of invasive alien species on the social, economic and cultural values Indigenous peoples and local communities is generally detrimental, measure for their control may also be detrimental.

Indigenous peoples and local communities have adapted to restoring ecosystems, but with the introduction of invasive alien species, there has been a terrible impact on Biodiversity and Indigenous women particularly play an integral role in the conservation, protection, monitoring and management of the native species. This should be given the highest priority.

The traditional knowledge and practices of the Indigenous peoples and local communities equip them on how to monitor and manage and control invasive alien species and should be included in the monitoring process to control and eradicate invasive alien species. However, there are also some invasive alien species that Indigenous peoples and local communities do **not** know how to



manage effectively. For instance, for the Kuna people don't eat certain fish species and the cat fish species has eliminated all other species of fish in the fresh waters of Panama.

It is important to acknowledge traditional knowledge, innovations and practices to control and prevent the risk of invasive alien species. Indigenous peoples and local communities' traditional knowledge and opinions should be taken into account as participatory approach before projects in forestry and agriculture are undertaken.

Therefore, it is important that Parties and other governments include Indigenous peoples and local communities with their full and effective participation in monitoring in-country movement and spread of invasive alien species with their free, prior and informed consent.

The terms of reference should take into account the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and local communities' members of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group to develop elements of technical guidance.

We also note that some aspects addressed in the Annex are not reflected in the section on Suggested Recommendations of the document, so we would like to suggest some additions to the Suggested Recommendations:

Under - *The Conference of the Parties*

2. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations and ***Indigenous peoples and local communities*** to apply the guidance;

3. *Decides* to establish an ad hoc technical expert group on invasive alien species, ***including Indigenous peoples and local communities' representation***, subject to the availability of financial resources, to convene a meeting of this group in accordance with the terms of reference contained in the annex;

Thank you Chair.