



WG2020 1

Nairobi, Kenya 27 - 30 August 2019

### **Opening Statement**

Distinguished delegates and Co-chairs,

Karibuni Kenya!

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB). We pay homage to the indigenous peoples and local communities from this land. We thank the co-chairs of the working group and the secretariat for preparing the documents for this important meeting.

At COP-14 in Egypt, we were very happy with the COP decision to have a comprehensive, inclusive and participatory process to develop the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

We are at a very critical moment of global transition, demanding the best of ourselves and the best of all other actors towards restoring balance in our relationships with nature. For Indigenous Peoples, this means an abiding self-determination and renewal of our spiritual and cultural values to defend living nature, sacred spaces and our territories from destruction.

The IPBES Global Assessment finds that Indigenous peoples' lands traditionally owned, managed, used or occupied cover approximately 35% of formal protected areas and approximately 35% of all remaining terrestrial areas with very low human intervention. This affirms the central role and vital contributions of IPLCs to fulfilling the goals of the Convention.

Building on this foundation, and with our rights fully recognised and protected in the post-2020 biodiversity framework, we can be strategic permanent partners with governments (as rights holders, not stakeholders). Supporting the collective actions of IPLCs and securing our rights to lands, waters, territories and resources can be among the most effective ways to make rapid progress in reversing biodiversity loss and to moving towards the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.

A human rights-based approach should therefore be fully integrated throughout the post-2020 framework, in particular the protection and prevention of killings of environmental human rights defenders.

The Convention becomes much stronger with a robust compliance mechanism, such as the Universal Periodic Review in the human rights system.

On the issue of transformational change, we believe that this happens through conscious cultural choices to renew our relationships with nature, respecting the rights of Mother Earth underpinned by a moral compass and ethical values. Youth actions on climate change manifest such cultural choices.

Nature-based solutions work with the application of cultural intelligence and innovation which is a feature of Indigenous and local knowledge. Other cultural traditions, including sciences bring their own intelligence to problem-solving.



We have been constructively engaging in the Convention for more than two decades and we are committed to further increasing our engagement for a successful post-2020 process and its subsequent implementation. With reference to Agenda Item 5 on the Future Work of the Open-ended Working Group and Allocation of Tasks to other intersessional bodies and processes, we call for the allocation of more spaces for IPLC representatives in all the relevant future consultations on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. We would also like to invite Parties and relevant donors to contribute more funding to the Voluntary Fund to fulfill the COP'14's decision for effective participation of IPLCs, including women and youth from to the geographical regions recognized by the CBD

We are experiencing the greatest collective environmental struggle ever as humanity. Current systems have brought us to the brink of extinction. Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities are being called on to play a central role in finding the solutions with others to the current planetary crisis. We are here to take up the challenge in collaboration and partnership with the parties and other actors.

Thank you for your attention.