

**FIFTH ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (APFSD)
UNITED NATIONS CENTRE, BANGKOK, 28-30 MARCH 2018**

Draft Statement: Indigenous Peoples Constituency

SESSION 5: National Perspectives and Progress through the Lens of the Voluntary National Reviews

1. Many VNR countries in Asia are **neglecting to cover all 17 SDGs** in their national reports addressed to the HLPF. This diminishes the indivisibility and integrality of the goals and goes against the principles for comprehensive follow-up and review agreed in the 2030 Agenda. Countries should report on progress toward all 17 SDGs, recognizing the indivisibility of the agenda and interlinkages among the goals. We are concern that this trend will be repeated in the VNR reporting at the HLPF in 2018 as well.
2. Among the 11 VNR countries in Asia being reviewed during the HLPF 2017, there is very little evidence of meaningful participation of indigenous peoples, including lack of acknowledgement for women as agents of change.
3. Further, there is an increasing trend of targeting human rights and environmental defenders in many countries of Asia. The recent case being the allegation against renowned indigenous leaders in Asia as terrorists. This is a trend that will seriously hamper the achievement of the universal commitment of the SDGs. The Goals are strongly anchored on the principles of human rights and democracy. It is critical that human rights and democracy is fully respected if the commitment that prioritizes those at highest risk of being left behind is to be translated into action.
4. We are concern that the universal pledges to “leave no one behind” will not be realized unless diligent political efforts are made by governments to address the systemic barriers and create the environment for establishing genuine collaboration and partnership with those who are furthest behind including indigenous peoples.
5. Governments will need to match the enthusiasm of civil society for engagement by setting up and communicating a transparent, participatory and inclusive national review processes. Governments need to strengthen efforts to publicize their plans and opportunities for participation, sharing common challenges and identifying best practices in right-holders and stakeholder engagement.
6. More effort should be made at all levels to raise awareness on the VNR process. Further, data disaggregation by ethnicity among others, and participatory monitoring mechanisms are important to be reflected in the National Action Plan on SDGs. Governments should invest more efforts in data generation and in developing indicators that are measurable and corresponds to the needs of indigenous peoples to properly reflect our situation and realities.
7. Governments should encourage and welcome data generation by indigenous communities and establish partnership with us, such as with the initiative on Indigenous Navigator.

We would like to acknowledge the delegation from Sweden who yesterday in this plenary, recognised the need for a broader engagement and the the roles of rights holders and the need to analyze the other knowledge systems” for relevant solutions that is “with people” instead of

“for the people”. There need to be more research on participation, that is full, effective and is “not forced” and not limited.

We also thank IFAD and FAO for recognizing the importance of indigenous peoples’ rights as well as small scale farmers, women and youth and the contribution of our livelihoods and traditional knowledge to ecosystems functions and services.

The realization of “leaving no one behind” is possible only with the full recognition of human rights and ensuring “full and effective” participation of the rights holders - not limited to but including indigenous peoples, fisher folks, persons with disabilities, women, youth among others.