

UNDROP Motion Materials for CELS Website

The Motion:

Actions to strengthen food sovereignty and security of indigenous peoples and peasant communities (*Motion 44*)

AWARE that indigenous peoples, peasants, and small farming communities, and other local, small-scale forms of organisation around the world have played and continue to play a key role in providing almost 80% of food for humanity and overseeing 80% of global biodiversity;

RECOGNISING, in this respect, the necessity to incorporate these communities as key players in the work to guarantee global food security and, at the same time, to recognise their issues with food insecurity expressed, mainly, in malnutrition, health problems and a growing impact on their environment, including agroecosystems, due to the effects of major changes in climate patterns and industrial agricultural activities;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that Aichi Biodiversity Target 3, which was supposed to be met in 2020, acknowledges the adverse effects of global agricultural and fishing subsidies on biodiversity and the environment, and that this threatens the ability of indigenous cultures and peasant communities to maintain their livelihoods and achieve food security;

FURTHER RECOGNISING the importance of Sustainable Development Goals 2 (zero hunger), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 12 (responsible consumption and production), 14 (life below water), 15 (life on land), 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), and 17 (partnerships for the Goals) to strengthen food sovereignty and security of indigenous peoples and peasant communities;

RECOGNISING that agrobiodiversity is a component that differentiates practices of indigenous peoples, peasants, and small farming communities, as a priority for conservation and the construction of sustainability, while providing them with resources to support their livelihoods;

OBSERVING that indigenous peoples and local communities are recognised as the central social subjects for conservation and sustainable development in Article 8, sub-paragraph j of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);

[WELCOMING] [NOTING] the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) by the UN General Assembly in December 2018;

NOTING that UNDROP calls on states to take measures aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of land and other natural resources, including through agroecology, and ensure the conditions for the regeneration of biological and other natural capacities and cycles;

[ACKNOWLEDGING that UNDROP recognises the right of peasants and other people working in rural areas to determine their own food and agriculture systems, recognised as food sovereignty by many States and regions;]

RECALLING that Congress has formerly recognised the link between promoting food sovereignty and conserving biodiversity (Resolution 3.017 Promoting food sovereignty to conserve biodiversity and end hunger (Bangkok, 2004)), and has acknowledged the need for IUCN to integrate human rights issues into its work (Resolution 5.099 IUCN Policy on Conservation and Human Rights for Sustainable Development (Jeju, 2012)); and

FURTHER HIGHLIGHTING the fact that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 25) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, Article 11) recognise the human right to adequate food as part of the right to an adequate standard of living;

The IUCN World Conservation Congress, at its session in Marseille, France:

1. ASKS the Director General to:

a. promote more discussions in the relevant Commissions on the relationship between food security, food sovereignty and indigenous peoples, [peasants, and small farming communities, including, for example, the connection between protected areas, [peasants' rights to land and other natural resources] as set out in UNDROP, and biodiversity conservation] [rural communities, taking into account traditional and local knowledge and the interaction with protected areas]; and

b. [disseminate UNDROP to all Members, and invite Members to support the implementation of UNDROP and the rights contained therein]; [remind State Members of the importance of disseminating and implementing UNDROP;]

2. REQUESTS the relevant Commissions to study options to strengthen food sovereignty and security of indigenous peoples, peasants, and small farming communities, including the role of agrobiodiversity, the adverse effects of fishing and agricultural subsidies on food security and biodiversity and ways to mitigate these, and traditional and local knowledge, among others;

3. CALLS ON Members, along with other international bodies, to promote the enactment of a decree to establish mechanisms for the recognition and protection of biocultural heritage in collective and rural territories in order to ensure the protection and autonomous conservation of agrobiodiversity, including the application of UNDROP and the rights provided therein; and

4. CALLS ON states and other stakeholders active in agrobiodiversity issues to:

a. [call for compliance with the right to] [ensure] free, prior and informed consent in territories mainly inhabited by indigenous peoples as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), in order to strengthen local governance, autonomy in agrobiodiversity issues, and the protection of traditional knowledge, [respecting the sui generis regime];

b. support indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights to priority and origin for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of their knowledge and the agrobiodiversity resources in and from their territories as set out in UNDRIP and UNDROP; and

c. recognise indigenous peoples' traditional and ancestral knowledge related to the integrated management of biodiversity, as well as the sociocognitive construction and articulation, and the protection of biocultural heritage.

The Explanatory Statement:

The essential biodiversity that underpins global food production is disappearing. As reported by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization in 2019, biodiversity for food and agriculture is in perilous decline as a result of high-input agriculture practices, monoculture farming, and changes in land, water and other natural resource management. Industrial agriculture has also led to a host

of other environmental problems, including deforestation, soil degradation, increased greenhouse gas emissions, extinction of species, and pollution of freshwater sources. Moreover, our industrial food system often impoverishes small-scale farmers, and displaces rural communities and indigenous peoples.

An alternative exists that supports economically-viable development and increased prosperity for small-scale farmers, while conserving biodiversity and preserving the integrity of local ecosystems. Peasant movements from around the globe are advancing a model oriented toward peasant-based agriculture that prioritizes local markets and uses agroecological production methods to facilitate the transition to more sustainable and inclusive food systems. This model underscores the rights of indigenous, rural, and traditionally-underrepresented peoples to define their own agricultural systems and policies, also known as the right to food sovereignty.

We now have a powerful legal tool to help ensure peasants' rights and elevate this model. In December 2018, the U.N. General Assembly adopted the landmark U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas ("UNDROP"). The result of nearly 20 years of mobilization by the social movement La Via Campesina and its allies, and six years of negotiation at the U.N. Human Rights Council, UNDROP is a response to the ongoing violations of the rights of peasants and other rural communities who help protect biodiversity and build sustainable food systems but are themselves disproportionately affected by extreme poverty and hunger.

UNDROP upholds peasant farming as an alternative to industrial agriculture. It also champions women's rights and affirms peasants' rights to land, seeds, and food sovereignty, as well as their right to maintain biological diversity through the use of traditional practices and knowledge. When their rights are recognized and protected, peasants inherently shore up the ecological infrastructure needed to conserve biodiversity, build sustainable food systems, and protect rural and urban communities against climate shocks. Notably, the IPCC 2019 Special Report on Climate Change and Land states with high confidence that agricultural practices that include indigenous and local knowledge can help overcome the combined challenges of climate change, food insecurity, and biodiversity conservation.

The need for transformative action, including in the realm of agriculture, is reflected in IUCN's views on the preparation, scope and content of the Post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Indeed, if we are to stem the significant biodiversity loss that is occurring alongside mass species extinction, we must reject destructive agricultural practices and embrace more sustainable food pathways. This, in turn, requires global recognition of the rights of peasants and respect for traditional agrarian knowledge.

The Amendments:

Amendment 1, Relating to Preambular Paragraph 7:

Requested action:

Retain the opening verb, “Welcoming.” Remove the suggested opening verb, “Noting.”

Requested amendment:

{WELCOMING} ~~{NOTING}~~ the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) by the UN General Assembly in December 2018;

Explanation:

The adoption of UNDROP was a historic milestone for both human rights and environmental protection and a welcome and much needed instrument to ensure the protection of biodiversity and peasants’ rights. Its adoption by the U.N. General Assembly, which followed six years of intergovernmental negotiations, has been welcomed by the FAO among others. We urge that this sentiment remain reflected in the motion language as the very intent of the original UNDROP motion (with which two other motions were merged) was to welcome the adoption of the Declaration and call for its dissemination and implementation.

Amendment 2, Relating to Preambular Paragraph 9:

Requested action:

Retain Preambular Paragraph 9 in its entirety.

Requested amendment:

{ACKNOWLEDGING that UNDROP recognises the right of peasants and other people working in rural areas to determine their own food and agriculture systems, recognised as food sovereignty by many States and regions;}

Explanation:

The retention of Preambular Paragraph 9 is of critical importance to this motion. The term “food sovereignty” is part of the title of this motion and this paragraph is the only place in the motion where the concept of food sovereignty is explained. The paragraph also ties food sovereignty to UNDROP, explaining why it is so important to peasant and other rural communities and how UNDROP explicitly

recognizes this right. We therefore see this paragraph as critical to understanding and effectuating the motion as a whole.

Amendment 3, Relating to Operative Paragraph 1a:

Requested action:

Retain, and add to, language that is inclusive of peasants and small farming and rural communities as groups who must be considered in the exploration of the relationship between them and food security and food sovereignty. Retain language that notes peasants' rights to land and other natural resources. Amend final bracketed language to retain a directive to account for traditional and local knowledge.

Requested amendment:

1. ASKS the Director General to:
 - a. promote more discussions in the relevant Commissions on the relationship between food security, food sovereignty and indigenous peoples, ~~{peasants, and small farming and rural communities, taking into account the role of traditional and local knowledge, of protected areas, and of including, for example, the connection between protected areas, {peasants' rights to land and other natural resources} as set out in UNDROP, and biodiversity conservation} [rural communities, taking into account traditional and local knowledge and the interaction with protected areas];~~ and

Requested final language:

1. ASKS the Director General to:
 - a. promote more discussions in the relevant Commissions on the relationship between food security, food sovereignty and indigenous peoples, peasants, and small farming and rural communities, taking into account the role of traditional and local knowledge, of protected areas, and of peasants' rights to land and natural resources as set out in UNDROP; and

Explanation:

CELS would like to retain the language, “peasants and small farming communities,” and add to it by including “rural” communities which will ensure the motion remains inclusive of those whose rights it addresses. CELS also suggests rephrasing the language of this paragraph for added clarity.

CELS requests these amendments to ensure language pertaining to upholding peasants' rights to land and other natural resources is retained, as those rights are

essential to fulfilling the intent of this motion which is to strengthen food sovereignty and food security of these groups. This language also serves to acknowledge and support the role that these groups play in providing food for humanity and protecting biodiversity, as detailed in UNDROP. If amended accordingly, Operative Paragraph 1 will reflect this important connection, outlined in UNDROP, which draws important connections between peasants' rights and the conservation of biodiversity and specifically includes peasants' rights to land and other natural resources in Articles 5, 17, 19, and 21 among other articles. The intent of the motion is, in part, to bring visibility to this historic Declaration and to the role of peasants and peasants' rights in protecting and promoting biodiversity conservation. As such, the language should be retained.

Amendment 4, Relating to Operative Paragraph 1b:

Requested action:

Retain language calling on the Director General to “disseminate UNDROP to all Members, and invite Members to support the implementation of UNDROP and the rights contained therein.” Remove language calling on the Director General to “remind State Members of the importance of disseminating and implementing UNDROP.”

Requested amendment:

b. ~~{disseminate UNDROP to all Members, and invite Members to support the implementation of UNDROP and the rights contained therein}; {remind State Members of the importance of disseminating and implementing UNDROP};~~

Explanation:

CELS' recommended language is more clear and contains an actionable directive to the Director General - that of disseminating UNDROP and inviting members to support its implementation. The intent of the motion is, in part, to raise awareness among IUCN members regarding UNDROP, hence the call for its dissemination by the Director General rather than simply “reminding” State Members of the importance of disseminating the motion.

Amendment 5, Relating to Operative Paragraph 4a:

Requested action:

Rephrase language concerning the right to free, prior and informed consent and clarify the right of indigenous peoples under UNDRIP. Remove language pertaining to the sui generis regime.

Requested amendment:

4. CALLS ON states and other stakeholders active in agrobiodiversity issues to:

a. ~~[call for compliance with the right to]~~ ~~[ensure]~~ **that indigenous peoples can exercise their right to** free, prior and informed consent **with regard to matters affecting their territories, as is their right under** ~~mainly inhabited by indigenous peoples as set out in~~ the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), in order to strengthen local governance, autonomy in agrobiodiversity issues, and the protection of traditional knowledge, ~~[respecting the sui generis regime];~~

Explanation:

This language issues a strong call to action and importantly, acknowledges that free, prior and informed consent is a right of indigenous peoples (as articulated in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples). Acknowledging and ensuring the rights of indigenous peoples and peasant communities is critical to fulfilling the intent of this motion which is to strengthen food sovereignty and food security of indigenous peoples and peasant communities, and to acknowledge and support the role that they play in providing food for humanity and protecting biodiversity.

CELS also recommends removing the language pertaining to the sui generis regime in the absence of language clarifying its application to this motion.