

Working with Indigenous People: Policy on Indigenous Rights

January 2017

This global statement is one way to demonstrate both our respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples and communities, and our intention to improve and strengthen the way our organization interacts and works with Indigenous Peoples across campaigns and regions.

1. Recalling the growing global concern for environmental survival, the inherent link between ecological health, security and human well-being, and deeply conscious of the ongoing efforts of Indigenous Peoples worldwide to secure rights, justice, recognition and prosperity;
2. Recognizing that the dominant power structures that have created the current environmental and social imbalances are often the same oppressive power structures that have and continue to strip Indigenous Peoples of their rights and denigrate their cultures;
3. Acknowledging the deep historic and contemporary injustices experienced by Indigenous Peoples worldwide;
4. Recalling Greenpeace campaigns conducted in respectful alliance with Indigenous Peoples, which resulted in enduring victories for people and nature, but also those which have lacked adequate consultation and understanding and resulted in hurting Indigenous Peoples, and with a genuine desire to learn from this history;
5. Ambitious to achieve the great potential for environmental and social justice that may be realized as a result of mutual respect, the enormous opportunities to learn from Indigenous cultures, and recognizing the need for more respectful and collaborative alliances between environmentalists and Indigenous Peoples;
6. Recognizing that the natural world is the basis of many Indigenous Peoples' ways of life; that the Indigenous right to self-determination, land and natural resources is unique with a complex history; and acknowledging the ecological benefit resulting from Indigenous Peoples' historic stewardship, traditional knowledge and sustainable land use;
7. Bound by Greenpeace's core mission of creating a green and peaceful world and of ensuring the ability of the Earth to nurture life in all its diversity; and in the spirit of hope, respectful and productive allyship, and in recognition that all peoples ultimately share in a common fate:

Greenpeace hereby agrees that:

8. Greenpeace supports the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the specific right to self-determination, freedom, peace and security, as individuals and collectively as distinct peoples, and to free, prior, and informed consent for decisions that will affect them, including any project on their traditional territories, particularly in connection with the exploration, development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, timber, fish, water or other resources. Indigenous Peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their traditional lands or territories.

9. Greenpeace supports the fair and just settlement of outstanding Indigenous rights and title issues and constitutional and other claims as foundational to developing sustainable societies.

10. Greenpeace respects the right of Indigenous Peoples to give or withhold their free, prior and informed consent on the establishment of protected areas on their traditional lands and territories. Greenpeace further respects the right of Indigenous Peoples to carry out activities, including hunting and fishing, on their traditional territories and to generate income from the products of such activities, recognizing that some of these activities may take place inside protected areas.

11. Greenpeace commits to conduct its campaigns in a manner that respects the rights of Indigenous Peoples and endeavours to support Indigenous Peoples in securing their rights wherever possible.

12. Greenpeace recognizes and respects the various forms of leadership within Indigenous communities. Greenpeace shall not be organizing events or actions on sites of cultural or spiritual significance for Indigenous Peoples without the prior consent of that leadership.

13. Respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples, Greenpeace acknowledges that there may be times when there will be differences of views between Indigenous Peoples and Greenpeace. Grounded by Greenpeace's mission, Greenpeace may disagree with decisions and with actions or activities that do not adhere to best available scientific information, the precautionary principle and the ecosystem approach, or that otherwise threaten to cause significant harm to species, habitats or the ecosystem as a whole. Greenpeace resolves to approach such instances when they arise, in a timely manner, in good faith and with deep respect beginning with establishing a forum that enables proper communication and opportunities for dialogue.

14. In all campaign planning and in all communication with Indigenous Peoples, Greenpeace commits to using the appropriate language and engaging in the appropriate methods of communication, participation and decision-making for whichever situation arises. Greenpeace will make specific commitments and take such special measures as will be effective in the particular circumstances to fully honour this policy.