

The Sira Declaration

Issued by global Indigenous youth from the Congo Basin, the Amazon, Borneo, and West Papua

Preamble

This declaration was made by 89 representatives of Indigenous Peoples who gathered at Sira Village in West Papua, on the lands of the Tehit Knasaimos people, at the Forest Defender Camp held during 23-26 September 2025.

We, the Indigenous youth of the four largest tropical forest regions of the world – the Congo Basin, the Amazon, Borneo, and West Papua – speak today with one voice.

We are Indigenous youth, carriers of ancestral knowledge, and protectors of the life systems that sustain not only our peoples, but the entire planet.

Yet our forests and communities face these ongoing threats:

- Exploitation of Indigenous territories through mining, logging, and other industrial-scale destructive activities.
- Intimidation, military violence, and arbitrary arrests of Indigenous Peoples.
- Weak or absent regulations protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the failure to ratify the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention.
- Land grabbing that displaces Indigenous Peoples from their territories.
- Decision-making processes that lack meaningful participation by Indigenous Peoples, especially women and youth.
- Limited access to education, funding, and capacity building, which hinders Indigenous Peoples from organizing, advocating, and managing their territories.

- Systematic disregard for traditional knowledge that is essential for sustainable management and climate solutions.

We reaffirm the [Brazzaville Declaration](#) (May 2025) and the Indigenous Youth Call from West Papua (2023). We commit to strengthening inter-regional networks connecting the Congo Basin, the Amazon, Borneo, and West Papua to share strategies, struggles, and solutions.

Our Global Demands

We call on governments, institutions, business, and all sectors of civil society at the local, national, and international levels to:

Recognize and Protect Rights

- We urge ratification of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, and their full implementation by all levels of government, no later than 2030.
- We call for effective recognition and protection of the boundaries of Indigenous territories and the rights to Indigenous land and natural resources; the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent; the right to maintain cultural and spiritual identity; and the right to self-determination.
- We urge governments to simplify documentation and administrative processes for recognizing Indigenous Peoples and to grant full control to Indigenous Peoples to manage and use resources, including funding and other supporting tools, for the benefit of Indigenous communities.

Ensure Participation and Leadership

- We call for Indigenous leadership, particularly by youth and women, requiring the institutionalization of full, inclusive, and effective participation in climate negotiations and all decisions affecting our territories and lives.
- We urge formal recognition of Indigenous youth constituencies within the UN Climate Convention and other multilateral processes.

Advance Gender Justice

- We call for the fulfillment of commitments under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women by ensuring equal rights for Indigenous women to territories and natural resources; women's leadership in governance; and their right to share benefits equitably.

End Violence and Destruction

- We reject and demand the end of military presence and operations in Indigenous territories.
- We urge an end to arrests of Indigenous Peoples and human rights and environmental defenders.
- We demand the creation of legislation and concrete actions to immediately halt deforestation, the expansion of fossil fuel industries, mining, and other destructive activities in Indigenous territories.
- We also demand the immediate implementation of existing international commitments to end deforestation and forest degradation.
- We urge a revision of the definition of forests by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to exclude monoculture plantations.

Support Indigenous-Led Solutions

- We call for the prioritization of direct funding mechanisms for Indigenous organizations and for capacity support in managing finance for mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage initiatives.
- We urge the integration of Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge into national climate and biodiversity policies and action plans.
- We call for the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples' climate action plans (NDCs) and biodiversity action plans (NBSAPs) into national policies and action plans.
- We call for support to guarantee Indigenous land ownership, food sovereignty, and education systems rooted in Indigenous knowledge.

Global Accountability

- We call for global supply chains to comply with the highest environmental and human rights standards, including but not limited to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and related instruments.
- We call on the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant UN bodies to monitor the implementation of this declaration and urge states not to interfere with these monitoring efforts.

Civil Society Integrity

- We urge non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donors, and human rights and environmental programs to work honestly for the interests of Indigenous Peoples, and not for institutional or donor self-interest.
- We call for all programs and projects to be planned and implemented with the Free, Prior and Informed Consent mechanism, ensuring the leadership and involvement of affected Indigenous Peoples.

Closing

The rainforests of the Congo Basin, the Amazon, Borneo, and West Papua are the foundation of life on Earth. The air we breathe, the water we drink, the plants and animals, and the climate that sustains us come from these ecosystems and the peoples who protect them.

We, Indigenous youth, hold an unshakable commitment: to protect our lands, honor our ancestral heritage, and secure a future for our descendants.

The climate crisis demands that everyone – governments, business, and international organizations – stand with us. Solutions exist and are rooted in our ancient knowledge and our relationship with nature. The time to act is now.

To keep this planet alive, the Congo Basin, the Amazon, Borneo, and West Papua must remain intact. Humanity seeks an answer, but the answer has always been here.

The answer is us.