

Commission on Sustainable Development 13
Interactive discussions on Access to basic water services.
Indigenous Peoples.- 12/4/2005

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Thank you Madame Chair,

Indigenous Peoples all over the world live in remote areas where accesses to basic facilities are not available. Indigenous women and children have to walk for long distances to look for water. As we face climatical changes world wide, water has become scarce and the only sources drying up. This has brought serious conflict among many communities. As Indigenous Peoples we have key points we would like to bring up the following policy options and measures:

1. Indigenous Peoples interest on water and customary uses must be recognized by governments by ensuring that indigenous peoples' rights are enshrined in national legislation and policy.
2. States must improved water governance which ensures effective use of existing resources and the active participation of indigenous peoples and all stakeholders; a substantial increase in financing water infrastructure and targeted financing schemes; and mechanisms for empowerment and capacity building.
3. Effective development and management of water resources, efficient and equitable provision of water supply and sanitation services are essential for poverty reduction, ecosystem protection and sustainable growth.
4. Indigenous Peoples and local communities must be active participants in the implementation of the Joint Plan of Implementation (JPOI) targets, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and planning and implementation of the Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) plans, the Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) initiative and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).
5. Governments should acknowledge the basic human right to water that the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ECOSOC) affirmed in November 2002. Recognition of this right in national policy-making and legislation is critical to bring about fundamental approach to poverty eradication.
6. Water must remain in public sector and all governments commit to pubic sector delivery of water. There must be assurance that adequate financial resources are made available and adequate local capacity is built.
7. Implement an ecological approach that incorporates Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) principles of water management.
8. Integrate indigenous TEK principles of the sacred nature of water.

Thank you Madame Chair