

Commission on Sustainable Development 13
Interactive discussion on Access to basic sanitation and hygiene,
Indigenous Peoples. 12/4/2005
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Indigenous Information Network

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

The realization of access to basic sanitation and hygiene requires first and foremost effective policies at the national level. States members have the primary responsibility and obligation to provide effective policies, setting priorities and allocating resources. It is also important the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and all the stakeholders that they alone can ensure that the actions of States in this area is in the best interest of the people. Indigenous Peoples would like to propose the following recommendations:

- Regional and global goals must be developed for realistic local and national target for improved sanitation services, adopting community – based, low-cost and intermediate technological approaches and bearing in mind the human right to clean sanitation and hygiene services.
- Adopt strategies that explore alternatives to large-scale private sector systems and technologies by seeking innovations in formal or informal small-scale water system providers, intermediate technologies, indigenous knowledge and community-based approaches.
- Developing and developed countries with indigenous tribal peoples must develop and strengthen clear policies, targets, financing mechanisms schemes and institutional frameworks to improve sanitation services and assure access to safe and adequate water supply to indigenous communities.
- Water and sanitation services must be demand-responsive and people-oriented which requires the public sector and local governments to plan, implement, maintain and own the system. Governments must commit to public sector delivery of water services.
- In areas of Indigenous communities, mechanisms for the option for Indigenous peoples to control and manage their own water and sanitation systems must be provided.
- Rainwater is also useful for sanitation and hygiene. Indigenous women can take care of multiple household needs and specially take responsibility on water quality and maintenance of Rain Water Harvesting systems.

We must understand that responsibilities and obligations require co-related duties and that sanitation and hygiene services can be ensured only if the existence of corresponding obligations is acknowledge both at national and international levels.

Thank you Mr. Chairman