



## **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES STATEMENT ON THE GEF PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES ON ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

**42<sup>ND</sup> GEF COUNCIL MEETING  
7<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

Thank you for allowing me to take the floor. On behalf of the indigenous peoples representatives attending this Council meeting we would like to express our gratitude to Mdme. Monique Barbut for her leadership in promoting greater participation by indigenous peoples to the GEF. We acknowledge her strong commitment for the development of a policy paper on indigenous peoples. We also thank the Government of Switzerland for its support to this process. We welcome the new CEO, Ms. Naoko Ishii and look forward to working closely with her in developing a policy on indigenous peoples in the next step of GEF.

The GEF, as the main funding mechanism of the Rio Conventions, plays an important role on Indigenous Peoples lives. Since its establishment twenty years ago it has funded projects that impact on the livelihoods, lands, territories and cultures of Indigenous Peoples. Through the issues paper developed by the Indigenous Peoples' Task Force on the GEF, we have presented the GEF our main concerns as indigenous peoples and our aspirations for a GEF Policy Paper. We have clearly asked that the GEF develop a rights-based policy paper taking into account the developments at the global policy arena and contributing to the realization of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We were disappointed when we were informed that the GEF couldn't at this time, develop a policy paper and instead will present 'Guidelines for Engagement'.

Despite our disappointment in not having a stand-alone policy at this time, we welcome the mechanisms outlined in the paper that have the potential to promote greater and more relevant participation by indigenous peoples in the GEF. We believe these mechanisms could be a step towards the development of a better policy by the GEF on indigenous peoples.

We ask that the Council support the implementation of the mechanisms outlined in the paper by setting a definite time frame for the secretariat to implement it and by allotting adequate financial resources for the continuation of the work on this important process.

Thank you.