

Thank you for yielding the floor Chair. My name is Bhavna Choudhury and I represent The Indegenous: an indigenous youth led initiative for knowledge sharing between our communities and the general public. I come from Assam, which is the gateway to one of the last remaining five primary forest regions on the planet. Indigenous peoples represent 80% of the world's managed biodiversity and yet we were not included in the original Stockholm Declaration of 1972.

I urge this body to work directly with indigenous peoples and to make good on the financial commitments and policy instruments promised to us. I urge national governments to consider the protection of indigneous languages, over 3000 of which today, are at the risk of extinction and with it the knowledge that comes throughout the generations. Ladies and Gentlemen, the unsustainable models of economic development and not prosperity, cannot be pushed into indigenous territories and developing countries anymore.

Finally we would like to recommend this body to reconsider the grouping of indigeneous peoples with local communities under the categorization of IPLC, whereas indigneous peoples are a major stakeholder at the UNGA. When it comes to policy being turned into action, this is where we need to be cognizant of this grouping so that indigenous peoples are not left behind once again.

Thank you.