



Organización Nacional de los  
Pueblos Indígenas de la  
Amazonía Colombiana

OPIAC House of Thought, Cundinamarca - Colombia  
October 12, 2021

Ladies and Gentlemen:

**United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - UNFCCC**

**Patricia Espinosa** - Executive Secretary

**Ovais Sarmad** - Deputy Executive Secretary

**Daniele Violetti** - Director of Program Coordination

**Chhaya Kapilashrami** - Operations Coordination Director

**Youssef Nassef** - Director of Adaptation

**James Grabert** - Director of Mitigation

Respected ladies and gentlemen:

Within the framework of the Summit of Indigenous Women of the Amazon Basin, held from October 8 to 12, 2021 in Colombia, with the participation of more than 170 women spokespersons for the 511 indigenous peoples in the 9 countries of the Amazon basin, we have come together to share our experiences, concerns and needs, regarding the threats present in our territories and the imminent degradation of the great Amazon rainforest.

**Today, October 12, known as the day of "Cultural Diversity", the women of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon have nothing to celebrate! We commemorate "529 years of resistance"**, We confirm that the multiple conflicts and problems that affect our territories and ways of life are shared realities throughout the Amazon basin and the world, therefore, we denounce the historical violation of our rights as indigenous peoples; we are all connected and what happens in the south, north, east and west, affects us in the Amazon and vice versa.

The Amazon has already lost [17 percent](#) of its forest cover, and 7 percent of its tropical forests have been degraded, these percentages continue to increase due to the incidence of the extractive industry, which pollutes our rivers and deforests our jungle, exacerbating the effects of climate change and putting biodiversity at risk; as well as the lives of the indigenous peoples that have inhabited and cared for this biome for thousands of years.

According to several scientific studies, indigenous peoples are the best managers and guardians of nature; we, indigenous women and defenders of the territory, are the voice, we are the action, we are the ones who are at the forefront of each struggle; We are the caretakers of the forests, the connoisseurs of traditional plants and medicines, the transmitters of ancient cultures, the protectors of water, the givers and defenders of life. **"Amazonian women are one with our jungles, that is why we have been and will continue to be, the guardians of the Amazon rainforest."** We are committed to actions that contribute to the mitigation of climate change.





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However, we feel that our collective voice is not represented in decision-making spaces. We do not have specific quotas to participate in the UNFCCC's Conference of the Parties, held annually, nor have any capacities to attend; we lack visibility and do not have funds to finance our initiatives that contribute to the conservation and protection of the Amazon.

The current climate finance system is not protecting forests, it only seeks to reduce emissions and continue to perpetuate the socio-economic model that prioritizes capital over life; this brought us here.

If we don't act now, the Amazon will lose its fundamental role as an strategic ecosystem and global climate regulator, bringing rapid and catastrophic consequences for the whole planet.  
**WE NEED TO ACT NOW!**

As guardians of the Amazon rainforest, the lung of the world, within the framework of the Summit of Indigenous Women of the Amazon Basin, we propose:

1. Include women from the Amazon basin in international discussions and decisions on the Amazon, as protagonists of the dialogues and main actors in the execution of policies, plans, programs and projects related to prevention and mitigation of climate change in the region, as well as beneficiaries of the compensation processes generated by the damage to our territories and ways of life.
2. Recognize the fundamental contribution of indigenous women in the management, restoration, reforestation and care of the territories, to keep the forests standing and keep the Amazon ecosystem stable, supporting our organizations to preserve our ancestral knowledge for the new generations, guaranteeing our biocultural survival and that of the entire Amazon.
3. Support the efforts of women in the management, care and production of the territory through their own economies, our models of good living, and support of collective life around food autonomy, the diversity of our own crops and ancestral processing techniques.
4. Carry out urgent actions that make it possible to stop the criminalization, assassination and disappearance of leaders who defend our territories.
5. Title and guarantee the administration of the territories as collective property of the indigenous peoples that have inhabited them for millennia, as a guarantee of conservation of the Amazon.
6. That climate funds reach our communities effectively and directly, to support the processes of conservation, protection and care of indigenous territories with greater autonomy.
7. Initiate a dialogue between the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC and the Council of Women of COICA, which will allow for direct dialogue with women. For this, we request to have a first face-to-face and / or virtual meeting in November 2021.





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We request, as women guardians of the largest tropical forest in the world, to be included in the spaces where decisions are made regarding policies and actions on climate change and in the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP). This must be a guaranteed and effective inclusion.

The indigenous women of the 9 countries of the Amazon, during our Summit, defined a mandate that encompasses 5 main lines of action: 1. Establishment of the Fund for Native Women of the Amazon Basin, 2. Establishment of the Network of Indigenous Women Defenders of the Amazonian Territory, 3. Emergence of the Movement of Indigenous Women of the Colombian Amazon, 4. Parity in the participation of women in all decision-making spaces at the local, national and regional organizational levels, 5. Follow-up and monitoring. In this regard, we invite you to be part and contribute effectively to these initiatives through our base organizations, thus contributing directly to women, indigenous peoples and territories, for the protection of life on the planet.

**Living Amazon, Safe Humanity.**

Sincerely,

Claudette Labonté  
**COICA Coordinator of Women and Family**

Fany Kuiru  
**Coordinator of Women and Family  
Of OPIAC (Colombia)**

Teresa Antazú  
**Head of Program Policy  
Indigenous Woman from AIDESEP (Peru)**

Maria Fernanda Perez  
**Coordinator of Women and Family  
of ORPIA (Venezuela)**

Josien Tokoe  
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Don Bernadette Stoll  
**Policy and Administration Office  
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