

CLOSING STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (IIFBES)

March 24, 2018

IIFBES is highly supportive of IPBES in all its efforts to strengthen the Knowledge-Policy interfaces to address present challenges with respect to nature and culture inter-actions. We highly value IPBES deliberations on its conceptual framework and multiple conceptions of nature's contributions to peoples and co-creation of values.

We consider IPBES6 as a significant milestone in IPBES work, with the adoption of SPMs of 4 regional assessments and the SPM on land degradation and restoration. We note recognition made in these assessments about the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in engendering biodiversity and nature's contributions to people, and the challenges in ensuring respect for human rights and secure customary land tenure.

We have followed closely deliberations about the first work programme, including a framework for a participatory mechanism for engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities in all four functions of IPBES. We welcome and appreciate the decision to consult with IPLCs on the application of the participatory mechanism in the context of all IPBES assessments, methodological guidance and IPBES institutional facilitation to ensure enhanced inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge, in the on-going and forthcoming IPBES work programmes. The network of Centres of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge are prepared to be strategic partners with IPBES in our important work together.

The external review of IPBES will be very important in continuous improvement, and we look forward to contributing to this undertaking, with specific attention to the inclusion of Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) in all IPBES deliverables. There continue to be significant challenges ahead of us, and a robust examination of IPBES rules and procedures that may impede inclusion ILK expertise in IPBES could be an important aspect of the external review.

We applaud the enormous contributions made by all experts to the work of IPBES, including those who have collaborated with us in the IPBES global assessment, the regional assessments, the land degradation assessment and in the work on scenarios and modelling. ILK holders and experts have also made our contributions. The next IPBES assessments on values and sustainable use of wild species are highly relevant themes which are living issues in our communities.

IPBES plenaries provide the space for many small face-to-face meetings which cement concrete work among partners – other stakeholders, governments, IPBES Secretariat and TSUs, and many others, and we thank all those who entered into conversations with us, leading to on-going and future collaborations.

Thank you very much Chair, for allowing us to make this closing statement.