

Indigenous rights for the rainforest protection

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

Frankfurt am Main, 9th August 2018. Granting indigenous rights is directly linked with the solution of the climate crisis, emphasise indigenous representatives in the “Declaration of Macapá”, the final document of the COICA conference of all nine indigenous national organisations of the Amazon Basin, which took place in Brazil from 20 to 22 June 2018. Indigenous areas have over 80 percent less destruction than other areas, and as such protect biodiversity, forests and the climate.

The newly elected COICA board, with José Gregorio Mirabal from Venezuela at its head, focuses on renewable energies – not only as a strategy against climate change, but also to protect the own living space. Their territories are threatened by major infrastructure projects such as hydroelectric power stations and roads, but also by large-scale agriculture, mining and oil production.

“ILO Convention No. 169 is one of the few legal instruments that recognise our territorial, political, economic and cultural rights. That is why it is important that Europe, in the fight against climate change and its new energy strategy, strengthens the indigenous peoples by ratifying the Convention. Only then can we keep contributing to this joint struggle”, Mirabal addresses supporters of the indigenous population in Europe.

In this spirit, the European Parliament decided in July to promote the full recognition and protection of the rights of some 370 million indigenous peoples worldwide. The resolution calls on the EU to respect the rights of indigenous peoples in all its development, investment and trade strategies. It also calls on all EU countries to ratify ILO Convention No. 169.

Luxembourg has already answered this call and was the 23rd country in the world and the fifth in Europe to ratify ILO No. 169. This is exemplary for all EU states, as it shows that even countries with no indigenous population can recognise their rights, thereby strengthening their claims and thus contributing to forest and climate protection. “Where indigenous peoples live and have land rights, the natural environment is preserved. In this way, ratification not only contributes to the protection of human rights, but also to the protection of the global climate”, explains Dietmar Mirkes of Climate Alliance in Luxembourg.

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A delegation from COICA will participate in the International Climate Alliance Conference “Connecting Cities – Municipal Solutions to Global Challenges” which will take place in Barcelona from 1 to 3 October 2018 and develop a strategy of cooperation for the coming years together with the member municipalities.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- [Declaration of Macapá](#) (in Spanish)
- [COICA website](#) (in Spanish)
- [Cooperation with indigenous peoples](#)
- International [Climate Alliance Conference](#)
- [Press photo](#)

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THE CLIMATE ALLIANCE

For more than 25 years, Climate Alliance member municipalities have been acting in partnership with indigenous rainforest peoples for the benefit of the global climate. With some 1,700 members spread across 26 European countries, Climate Alliance is the world’s largest city network dedicated to climate action and the only one to set tangible targets: each member city, town and district has committed itself to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 10 percent every 5 years. Recognising the impact our lifestyles can have on the world’s most vulnerable people and places, Climate Alliance pairs local action with global responsibility.

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