



International Conference

# Indigenous Terra Madre 2015 (ITM 2015)

3 – 7 November 2015 Shillong, Meghalaya, North East India



The Future We Want  
Indigenous Perceptive and Actions

## THE SHILLONG DECLARATION

(A living document based on the sessions held at ITM 2015  
Shillong, Meghalaya, North East India)

*Inspired* by the Sami people who organised the First Indigenous Terra Madre in Jokkmokk, Sweden from 17 to 19 June 2011;

*Thankful* to Pope Francis for reminding the world that Indigenous Peoples “should be the principal dialogue partners”;

*Grateful* to His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales for his video message to ITM 2015, where he encouraged us to look to Indigenous wisdom to “develop an approach that acts locally by thinking globally, just as nature does with all parts operating harmoniously to establish a coherent whole”;

*Guided* by three years of close interaction and exchange of ideas with local Indigenous communities of India (Meghalaya, Nagaland and Koli Hills), Thailand, Kenya, Ethiopia, Peru and representatives of other countries, including meetings at Terra Madre gatherings in Turin, Italy in 2012 and 2014;

*Impressed by and grateful* to the Government of Meghalaya of North East India that joined in support of ITM 2015 and in particular to its Chief Minister whose strong personal collaboration is a model for similar indigenous events;

*Responding* to the requests of these Indigenous food communities to continue creating a platform for the exchange of experiences and ideas for protecting our sustainable local food systems and our food and seed sovereignty;

*Acknowledging* that Indigenous Peoples are breeders of agricultural biodiversity, that women and men hold rich agroecological knowledge and that their food systems need to be nurtured and, wherever possible, scaled up, since these healthy ecosystems produce micronutrient-rich foods;

*Affirming and underscoring* the provisions and principles contained in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007, and in the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2014, which affirm the rights to food security and nutrition, self-determination, lands, territories and resources, free prior and informed consent, spiritual relationship with land

and resources, traditional livelihoods, sustainable resource management systems, customary laws, traditional governance structures and the protection and transmission of traditional knowledge, amongst others; and

Sharing the Slow Food and Terra Madre philosophy that everyone has a fundamental right to good, clean and fair food and consequently the responsibility to protect the heritage, tradition and culture that make this possible.

We, the representatives of 170 Indigenous food communities and delegates from 62 countries in Africa, the Americas, the Arctic, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the Pacific (see appendix), who have gathered in Shillong, North East India, from 3 to 7 November 2015, to participate at the Second Indigenous Terra Madre, *hereby agree by consensus to the following commitments and proposals for action:*

1. We highlight the fundamental and spiritual connection that people have to the Earth, and how that relationship is the foundation for the health or ill of our food system;
2. We reiterate that the agrobiodiversity created and maintained by Indigenous Peoples and rural communities throughout the world plays an essential part in achieving agroecological production for assuring improved nutrition for all;
3. We reaffirm that traditional knowledge plays an essential part in ensuring that agrobiodiversity and agroecological practices are maintained and made available for current and future generations;
4. We proclaim that Indigenous Peoples have already demonstrated the many ways in which agrobiodiversity can be used to adapt and build resilience. Adaptation to change, especially climate change, requires the use of the diversity present in and around production and consumption systems. Indigenous food systems can offer solutions to these current global challenges;
5. We call upon Governments and other constitutional bodies to make certain that Indigenous Peoples and local communities who care for and maintain their lands and territories be allowed to continue to protect, sustainably use, restore and enrich the variety of seeds, breeds, fish, bees and other living organisms they host. They must be respected and acknowledged in appropriate ways for their stewardship role and capacity to generate marvellously diverse food for people and cultures. They must be encouraged to nourish and strengthen the languages and traditional knowledge, practices and institutions that evolved with their agrobiodiversity, and be secured in their spiritual domains, collective governance, and management of relevant land, water and natural resources;
6. We encourage our Peoples and communities, including youth, to increase their consumption of local foods, both cultivated and collected, to keep us healthy and nutritionally secure, and we encourage chefs to use native plants and animal ingredients to prepare gourmet meals, thereby educating consumers;
7. We uphold that our concept of wellbeing stems from the combination of social harmony, cultural identity and the meeting of basic needs. United, we conclude that without peace and security there cannot be wellbeing. We call upon all to acknowledge that conflict, unpredictable climate and land alienation have diminished wellbeing;
8. We encourage all of our Peoples, communities and other traditional knowledge holders to identify the “gatekeepers of agrobiodiversity” (local producers/herders/fishers/hunters and



gatherers) amongst them—women and men—who maintain, adapt and promote a large diversity of food plants, animal breeds, seeds and medicinals, and thereby are the custodians of our global agrobiodiversity;

9. We support the establishment, consolidation and strengthening of food system-specific networks (e.g., millet, rice, livestock breeders, corn, pollinators, shifting cultivation), so as to exchange experiences and best practices through meetings and learning channels. Members of these networks could then engage in policy dialogue at local, national and international levels;
10. We urge local governments to include in the school curriculum the teaching of agrobiodiversity across food systems, and to promote programs that incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of learning. Additionally, we encourage universities to promote Indigenous scholarly contributions through Indigenous-led research, trainings and programs of action;
11. We encourage our Peoples and communities to organise, in collaboration with local knowledge holders, eat-ins and biodiversity walks through their available forest, grassland, wetland, desert, and other natural areas, as a way for young people to develop a deeper relationship with locally available varieties of wild edibles and medicinal plants;
12. We endorse our Peoples and communities to establish community-based seed/breed banks in order to halt the disappearance of valuable seeds and animal breeds. We call on the Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty to lead this initiative at the global level, and we call upon like-minded funders to sustain this initiative;
13. We urge our Peoples and communities to continue writing our narratives, digitally, orally or through any other culturally relevant practice, like sand drawing. Storytelling is “a process of reclaiming culture”, and since culture is not linear or static, our narratives are always evolving and must continue to be told;
14. We stress that our initiatives on food sovereignty, tenurial security and knowledge safeguarding are part of a larger movement to fundamentally transform the nature of economic and political systems away from those dominated by the state or private corporations, and towards community-centred, ecologically sustainable, socially just, and economically equitable alternative models of human and planetary wellbeing;
15. We further call upon the Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty to work with funders and supportive Governments, like the Government of Meghalaya, and NESFAS to promote appropriate intercultural Agroecology Schools that would encourage farmer-to-farmer exchange and traditional knowledge-to-modern knowledge learning circles;
16. We call upon Governments to adopt appropriate policies aimed at strengthening agrobiodiversity and ecologically sustainable food systems, reducing external inputs (chemical fertilisers and pesticides, *in primis*) and food waste, while promoting short chain distribution channels;
17. We note many food-secure Indigenous societies marked by the maternal oversight of both women and men that is characteristic of matrilineal societies. We encourage the Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty to see these as matriarchal, democratic societies, ruled by peace and with equal roles for women and men. Marked also by consensus, cooperation, a forgiving cosmology and caring, such societies provide a much needed international model for social forms that reject all kinds of violence, including violence against women;



18. We recognise the power of youth networks to respond creatively to 21st century challenges and the ability of young Indigenous Peoples to link tradition with innovation in the most effective ways, and support the creation of an Indigenous Youth Network, which lies at the crossroads of Indigenous Terra Madre and the Slow Food Youth Network;
19. We continue to acknowledge the severe multiple impacts of climate change and its causes and urge the global leadership that strong provisions concerning Indigenous rights, nutrition, food sovereignty (including agroecology practices and support to small-scale producers), and the integrity and resilience of social-ecological systems must be included in the implementation of the Paris agreement;
20. We oppose the concept of “climate smart” crops developed by multinationals for their own profit and encourage our Peoples and communities, especially Indigenous women, to identify and catalogue climate resilient crops, rooted in dynamic, co-evolutionary processes between our Peoples and their agricultural landscapes;
21. We call for the implementation by UN Agencies, including FAO, IFAD, UNDP, IUCN, ILO as well as governmental bodies and agencies and supporting NGOs, of training programmes and activities to raise awareness about food sovereignty and related rights of Indigenous Peoples, including securing land rights in the face of land grabbing. We further call for respect and recognition at all levels for Indigenous Peoples’ local food systems, traditional use and practices;
22. We call upon the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in its 15th session to organise a discussion on agrobiodiversity gatekeepers and the networks established during ITM 2015, to raise awareness of the need (and current efforts) to strengthen Indigenous food systems around the world, including dryland agriculture, and pastoralists and other mobile peoples;
23. We desire that ITM becomes an autonomous and integrated Indigenous Peoples network that brings in diverse food communities linked to the Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty, Slow Food International and other local, national and global organisations. It will uphold Slow Food’s shared values of good, clean and fair food by strengthening Slow Food in the different territories worldwide;
24. We will disseminate this Agreement through our communities and networks and share updates as to its implementation through social media. We recommend that NESFAS takes the lead by establishing a web-based knowledge network to which all ITM 2015 participants could post their achievements. NESFAS would aggregate the information provided on a quarterly basis and post it on the network; and

Finally we express our appreciation for and solidarity with the Khasi People, and thank them, the Government of Meghalaya, the city of Shillong and the villages of Moosakhia, Khweng, Dombah, Mawhiang, Nongwah, Pyrda, Laitsohpliah, Dewlieh and Nongtraw, and NESFAS for their warm hospitality in welcoming us to their traditional homelands. We further express appreciation to Slow Food International, the Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty, The Christensen Fund, AgroEcology Fund, Swift Foundation, Bread for the World, Tamalpais Trust, CS Fund, FAO and IFAD for supporting the development of Indigenous Terra Madre 2015.

*For our Lands, our Peoples, and our Future Generations, we approve this Declaration by consensus on 24 February 2016.*



# Appendix: Indigenous Tribes Represented at Indigenous Terra Madre 2015

## Africa

AGIKUYU  
BAKANJO/BAKONZO  
BATWA  
BORANA  
BORANA OROMO  
BURJI  
EL MOLO  
GAMO  
GEDEO  
HADIYA  
HOR  
IMGHRANE  
IGBOS  
KALANGA  
KALENJIN  
KONSO  
MAASAI  
NYIRAMBA  
OGIEK  
OROMO  
OROMO, KARRAYYU  
PASTORALIST  
RENDILLE  
SAMBURU  
TSONGA  
TURKANA  
WATTA  
WAAYYU

## Americas

ANISHINAABE  
AYMARA  
ECASH  
GUARANI OCCIDENTAL  
HAIDA  
HOPI  
JURUNA YUDJA/MEDIO XINGU  
KANIEN/'KEHAKA  
KANIENKEHAKA MOHAWK

KICHWA KARANKI  
KIWICHA PURUWA  
KOGUI  
MAYA PENÍNSULA DE YUCATÁN  
MAYA TZELTAL  
MAYAN KAQCHIKEL  
MAPUCHE  
MAPUCHE LAFKENCHE  
MDEWAKANTON DAKOTA  
METIS  
MOHAWK  
MUWEKMA OHLONE TRIBE  
NAHUA  
NATIVE HAWAIIAN  
NAVAJO NATION  
OGLALA LAKOTA  
OJIBWE  
OPATA PEOPLE OF SONORA  
OTOMÍ DE SAN FRANCISCO  
MAGÚ  
PUEBLO OF TESUQUE, TEWA  
QUECHUA  
QOMLE'EC  
SATERÉ-MAWÉ  
SENECA NATION/  
HAUDENOSAUNEE  
SYILX  
TAÍNO  
TLA-O-QUI-AHT  
WAYUU  
WHITE MOUNTIAN APACHE  
WICHI  
XAKRIABÁS  
ZAPOTECO-SIERRA SUR

## Asia

AINU  
AKHA  
BAYANSONGINOT  
BEDOUIN-SOUTHERN JORDAN

CHANIAGO  
DAYAK LUNDAYEH  
EVENK  
IBAN  
ICHANANAW  
JAVARA  
KALINGA  
KAREN  
KAZAKH  
KHONGOODOR OF BURYAT-  
MONGOL PEOPLE  
KUI  
KYRGYZ  
MAN ZU 满族  
MONGOLS  
QASHQAI-HEYBATLOO  
RYUKYU  
SHUGHNAN  
SUNUWAR  
TAJIK  
TAMANG  
TSONGOL OF BURYAT-MONGOL  
PEOPLE  
TUBULARS  
WAKHAN

## Europe

CRIMEAN TATAR  
SAMI

## India

ADI  
ALUKURUMBA  
ANAL  
ANGAMI  
AO  
APATANI  
BADGA  
BODO  
BOTO



CHAKHESANG  
CHANG  
DARLONG  
DEBBARMA  
DEORI  
GANGTE  
GARO  
HMAR  
HRANGKHAWL  
IRULA  
JAINTIA  
KARBI  
KATTUNAICKAN  
KHASI  
KHIAMNIUNGAN  
KONDH  
KONYAK  
KUKI  
LAI  
LAINGMAI  
LAMKANG  
LOTHA  
LUSHAI  
MAO  
MARA  
MAYALI  
MEITEI  
MISING  
MONPA  
NYISHI  
ORAON  
PAITE  
PANIYA

POCHURY  
POUMAI  
RABARI  
RENGMA  
RONGMEI  
SANTAL  
SHOLIGA  
SIMTE  
SUMI  
TANGKHUL  
THADOU  
TODA  
WARLI  
YIMCHUNGER  
ZEME

### Pacific

ANEITYUM  
ATZERA, MARKHAM VALLEY  
BINANDERE  
BUGOTU  
BUNURONG  
DHURGA  
GORORAVE  
GUADALCANAL COMMUNITY  
HUITA  
KAFESA COMMUNITY  
KANAK  
LAWAKI COMMUNITY  
LELEPA  
MAORI  
NARAK  
YUIN

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