

**Policies and Politics:  
Impacts of the Convention on  
Biological Diversity and the  
Intergovernmental Forum on  
Forests on Indigenous Peoples**

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# Earth Summit 1992

## Rio Declaration

- Indigenous peoples have a vital role in environmental management and development
  - established relevance of traditional knowledge and traditional practices in sustainable development
- ❖ **Outcomes: Agenda 21, Forest Principles and Convention on Biological Diversity**

# Agenda 21



## **Chapter 26 Recognizing and Strengthening the Role of Indigenous Peoples**

- ❧ urges governments to adopt laws to protect Indigenous intellectual and cultural property**
- ❧ empowerment of Indigenous Peoples**
- ❧ strengthening their active participation in national laws, policies and programs pertaining to resource management**

# Convention on Biological Diversity

- ❧ international treaty to deal conservation and sustainable use of Earth's biodiversity
- ❧ Article 8(j): *Subject to national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous peoples, promote its wider application, and encourage the equitable sharing of benefits*
- ❧ Article 10(c): *the customary uses of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices should be protected and encouraged*

# **Forest Biological Decision VII**

- ❧ Holistic ecosystem approaches integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking into account social, economic and cultural considerations**
- ❧ Development of methodologies to advance the integration of traditional knowledge into sustainable forest management in Accordance with Article 8(j)**

## **Outcomes:**

**Methodologies to help ensure that forest plans and practices reflect social, cultural and economic values of forests as well as view of all forest stakeholders**

**Although Canada has signed this Convention, too often forests are still being managed solely as sources of timber**

# Forest Principles



- **statement on principles for a global consensus on the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests**

**2(b) Forest Resources and forest lands should be sustainably managed to meet social, economic, cultural and spiritual needs**

**5(a) National forest policies should recognize and support the identity, culture and rights of Indigenous Peoples**

**5(b) The full participation of women in all aspects of management, conservation and sustainable development should be actively promoted**

- ❧ **Following the development of the Forest Principles no global consensus on how to deal with forests**
- ❧ **a forum separate from the CBD needed to concentrate on forests to try to get consensus**
- ❧ **The UN Commission on Sustainable Development established the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests**

# **The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Forum on Forests**

- ❧ **The Intergovernmental Panel on Forests was established (IPF) 1995 - 1997.**
  - **promote the implementation of the Forest Principles and Chapter 11 of Agenda 21 (deforestation).**
  - **Came up with 176 Proposals for Action.**
- ❧ **The Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) was established 1997-2000. Mandate to implement Proposals for Action put forward by IPF. Last session January 2000.**

## **Some of the relevant IPF proposals for actions dealing with TFRK:**

- ❧ 40(d) national forest programmes take measures to rehabilitate and protect TFRK**
- ❧ 40(g) enhance the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to participate in agreements that apply TFRK for sustainable forest management**
- ❧ 40(n) in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, promote digital mapping and geographic position systems, combined with social mapping, to assist in the location and storage of cultural information to support the management and protection of TFRK**

# Canada's push Forest Convention



- ❖ no meaningful consultation with Aboriginal Peoples
- ❖ accused of stalling the program of work that exists for forests (CBD) in their “*either this or nothing*” approach
- ❖ a Convention on Forests may convert dubious logging practices into internationally accepted law

- ❖ **for one thing no emphasis on conserving biodiversity in other forum currently dealing with forests, ie. IFF**
- ❖ **very much a trade focus, ie. Trade and environment, valuation goods and services, economic instruments, future supply and demand**
- ❖ **no accepted definition of sustainable forest management**
- ❖ **Hopefully not a talk and log Convention**



- ❖ **The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is a legally-binding agreement looks at conservation of the ecosystem as a whole**
- ❖ **Removing forests from under the umbrella of the CBD has the potential to become an instrument to deal with trade, and not the holistic management and sustainable use of the forest and all its resources.**

❧ **has the potential to undermine the CBD**

**WHY? According to International Law:**

❧ **a more specific treaty takes precedent over a more general one**

**Thus because a Forest Convention will deal specifically with forests it has the potential to become the only mechanism to deal with forests**

# What's Up in B.C.



- ❖ **Forest Practice code assigns priority to timber production and not conservation of biodiversity**
- ❖ **FPC Biodiversity Guidebook**
  - **does not mention traditional knowledge, involvement of First Nations /culture/ or 8(j)**
  - **relaxes biodiversity requirements in situations AAC may be impacted (page 9)**

- ❖ **As long as policies and legislation set by corporate industrial needs, policies to protect and promote the conservation of biological diversity, Aboriginal priorities and interests, will be inadequate**
- ❖ **Canada has already agreed to and signed the Convention on Biological Diversity**
- ❖ **Bottom line: They are not implementing it**
- ❖ **Why should, and how would, another be any better?**

