

N. Inclusion of the concerns of indigenous women in the decision-making process.

We call on United Nations commissions, agencies, financial and development bodies, as well as non-governmental organizations and nation states to bring their resources to bear on the following concerns.

The voice and wisdom of indigenous women must be heard in international forums. Their traditional knowledge as caretakers of the Earth must be acknowledged, and their interdependence with the land must be honored. Focal points for indigenous concerns should be established in all United Nations agencies, commissions, and tribunals, particularly for the Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

We affirm the right of indigenous women to practice their land based spiritual traditions, and to have access to and control of their traditional sacred sites. We ask that the Commission on Sustainable Development and other bodies, develop mechanisms to protect sacred sites.

Indigenous herbal medicine and healing practices must be recognized and preserved. Lack of consideration for these practices has seriously undermined the health and well-being of indigenous women and children. Intellectual property rights to these traditional remedies must be retained by the indigenous communities, not usurped by the transnational pharmaceutical corporations. We call on international agencies, especially the World Health Organization to re-examine their attitudes and policies towards traditional indigenous medicine.

Indigenous women hold the culture and traditions of their peoples and communities. This source of knowledge is now endangered. Traditional indigenous knowledge, practices, and legacies must be supported through recognition of self-determination. Control of education and information dissemination are vital to indigenous cultural survival. We call on all United Nations agencies to support the development of indigenous grassroots initiatives in these areas.

Destruction to indigenous ancestral lands must be stopped. We call for international environmental review procedures must be implemented before any major power or development projects are initiated which impact indigenous lands. We also call for international forums to address issues of nuclear waste and contamination.

We condemn programs to store genetic material from "endangered indigenous human species". We feel that financial resources for these projects should go instead towards assisting in the preservation of these peoples.

We call on all nation states, United Nations bodies and non-governmental agencies to facilitate the participation of indigenous women in decision making processes. The destruction of indigenous peoples and cultures, is indicative of the destruction of the Earth. The cry of indigenous women, the cry of Mother Earth, must be heard now.