

DECLARATION TOWARDS FAIR AND TRANSPARENT CARBON MARKETS AND REDD+ PROCESSES

In the face of the Climate Crisis and its serious global consequences, governments and private enterprises have pushed forward "Nature-based Solutions" which include carbon markets and REDD+ initiatives. However, the construction of these mechanisms did not consider, from their design, the vision of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and other collectives, protected by rights. Today, these mechanisms raise serious doubts regarding the accuracy of their accounting, real impacts, and respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Given the evident urgency of this climate crisis and with the purpose of ensuring that "Nature-based Solutions" are effective instruments in the fight against global warming and also respectful of the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, the leadership of the Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests (AMPB), representing ten territorial organizations of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, has deemed it appropriate to issue the San Salvador Declaration on Carbon Markets and Jurisdictional REDD+.

In AMPB, we have based ourselves on the collective analysis carried out by the Carbon Markets Working Group, composed of representatives from Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' organizations, advisors, AMPB technical team, as well as allied organizations, which convened in San Salvador, El Salvador on March 12th and 13th, 2024.

Our analysis and proposals draw from the content of the Paris agreements, the Cancun Safeguards, and other agreements reached by governments in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as well as from International Labour Organization Convention 169 for Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, but also from customary norms developed throughout history by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in Mesoamerica.

We declare:

1. That AMPB is a plural, diverse, and representative platform of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, which for over 13 years have come together, setting aside our differences, to build and promote a joint agenda

of common interests, allowing us to draw upon different experiences and learnings to address global processes as dynamic, controversial, and technical as carbon markets and the REDD+ mechanism.

2. That we know carbon markets were built as market instruments with the idea that they would be self-sustaining and provide certainty about the execution of actions to combat Climate Change, but they overlooked the social and rights aspects of Indigenous peoples, local communities, and other collectives. It has been a challenging path to incorporate this important component within the various standards and processes that exist to date.
3. That we are convinced that carbon markets, whether through government initiatives or private projects, must respect and promote the rights of Indigenous peoples, local communities, and other collectives, as well as the agendas and priorities built by them.
4. That we are concerned about the doubts raised by the inconsistencies of various carbon market projects, both in the private and governmental spheres, as to whether they are truly generating positive impacts and to a sufficient scale in the fight against Climate Change.
5. That to promote and contribute to achieving a Fair and Transparent Carbon Market, we will transform our proposal for additional layer on rights into a **Guide on Rights and Transparency in Carbon Markets and REDD+ initiatives**, which we will be presenting very soon. This guide will include the indispensable guidelines on the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, and other collectives, with concrete proposals for the implementation of safeguards and transparency mechanisms. This document will be addressed to national and subnational governments, developers, standards, brokers, certifying bodies of standards, and coalitions or donors supporting and promoting carbon markets and REDD+ initiatives.
6. That with the same purpose, we will soon launch, together with allied organizations and institutions, an **Observatory of carbon markets and REDD+ initiatives** that will monitor the market's development to identify which governments, companies, standards, and other actors are developing transparent processes in their environmental impacts and respectful of

rights, but also vigilant about which processes and jurisdictions are not being met.

7. That given the severity of this planetary climate crisis, there is no time for simulations or failed processes: we are convinced that projects and initiatives that do not respect the rights of peoples and communities will undoubtedly be increasingly questioned and even halted. Therefore, we invite national and subnational governments, private companies seeking carbon credits, project developers, brokers, and the various actors in the carbon market and REDD+ processes to assume and respect the rights of Indigenous peoples, local communities and Afro-descendant peoples.

On the 20th day of March 2024, from the mountains and indigenous and community territories of Mesoamérica

We are Forests of People!
Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests