

UNGASS-Biodiversity
Equator Prize 2010 Community Declaration

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honor of addressing you today on behalf of twenty-five communities who are in New York to receive the UNDP Equator Prize.

Our local and indigenous community projects have been recognized as best practice in integrating biodiversity conservation, poverty reduction, and adaptation to climate change.

Our approaches are diverse, but they all show the interdependence between healthy ecosystems and our quality of life and wellbeing.

It has become clear in all of our projects that women are at the forefront of making things happen. And educating and involving our children is the key to a sustainable future.

We are setting priorities locally, and forging locally relevant solutions. Only by including us as equal partners will development be sustainable.

We know that negotiations are underway for the post-2010 biodiversity targets, and we urge the full and effective participation of local and indigenous communities in the development of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

It is critical that environmental finance, such as REDD and protected areas, reach the local level, and be allocated through participatory and decentralized approaches.

The principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples must guide all policy and finance regimes and their application.

Our work can be supported and replicated by scaling-up initiatives such as the GEF-Small Grants Programme and the Equator Initiative.

Local and indigenous community experience is *essential* for meeting the Millennium Development Goals. Support us to continue managing our ecosystems in a way that responds to local needs and builds on local knowledge, through full and effective participation.

When supported by the right policies and enabled to realize our rights...**we will deliver results.**

Thank you.