



## **International Funders for Indigenous Peoples' Linking Circles IV**

### **Session Descriptions**

#### **1) UN Protection of Indigenous Rights and Resources**

Join this session to explore the efforts of Indigenous leaders and other advocates to use the United Nations to create new human rights protections specific to Indigenous peoples. We will discuss advocacy for the passage/implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which would oblige all countries to respect the rights, lands, resources, environments, and cultures of Indigenous Peoples. We will also explore how the UN Permanent Forum and other mechanism can be used to protect Indigenous rights.

#### **2) Indigenous Peoples and Extractive Industries: Strategies to Protect Human Rights and the Environment**

Indigenous peoples' rights, lands and livelihoods are profoundly affected during natural resource extraction such as logging, mining, oil, and natural gas, as well as water diversion. As multinational corporations traverse the globe in search of increasingly scarce resources, indigenous peoples face new threats and require new strategies to demand consultation, participation, and accountability. This panel will look at innovative legal and policy strategies to link human rights and the environment. It will highlight the recent victory of indigenous villagers from Burma in their lawsuit against Unocal oil company, and focus on successful partnerships between grassroots and international advocates. It will also explore initiatives to: build local capacity, increase the power of indigenous peoples with regard to corporations and international financial institutions, and raise indigenous voices in international policy debates.

#### **3) Indigenous Education and Language Revitalization**

Studies estimate that there are 5,000 to 7,000 spoken languages in the world, of which 4,000 to 5,000 are indigenous. More than 2,500 of these are in danger of immediate extinction, while the UN estimates that up to 90% of all languages could die out over the next century. This session will bring in international leaders in indigenous education and language revitalization to discuss successes and challenges in preserving the world's endangered languages, and in strengthening vulnerable communities through culturally appropriate educational programming.

#### **4) Indigenous Peoples and Tsunami Aid – Relief or Second Catastrophe?**

Many of those affected by the Asian catastrophe were indigenous peoples. Instead of helping, reconstruction efforts—such as aid being used to push traditional fisher peoples away from the coastline to make way for luxury hotels—may be contributing to a second disaster. How are emergency funding efforts considering indigenous peoples' visions and organizational infrastructure in their giving strategies? What are the plans of indigenous organizations to confront this unsustainable development model and preserve their cultures and livelihoods? Please join us for a provocative session with Indigenous leaders and funders.

#### **5) Indigenous Stewardship, Biodiversity and Conservation**

Indigenous peoples' relationship with their land is one of environmental stewardship that promotes and practices many of the desired objectives outlined in the mission statements of conservation organizations. There have been several cases where environmental conservation organizations have shown little regard for Indigenous peoples' ancestral land tenure or environmental stewardship. To facilitate dialog around this disturbing tendency, we will be discussing how conservation organizations relate to Indigenous peoples with respect to logging and oil companies that continue to severely damage the world's oldest and most diverse rainforests. We will examine the basic issues; why there are conflicts between conservationists and Indigenous Peoples, brief consideration of the conservationists' policies and how the 'language' of conservation ('wilderness', 'virgin forest') can lead to inappropriate concepts and strategies finally offering recommendations to improve relations. We will look at two examples, the Batwa 'Pygmy' who were forcibly evicted from various national parks in the Congo and a successful example of indigenous conservation in Brazil.

#### **6) Indigenous Peoples and Water**

One billion people live with inadequate access to potable water and sanitation. The UN predicts that this number will grow to 2 billion in 20 years, with the result that one out of three people will lack adequate access to water. Those living with chronic water scarcity are almost exclusively poor people in developing countries. The limited responses of bilateral aid agencies and multilateral organizations are exacerbating the global crisis by focusing on privatizing the management of water and engineering dikes and dams. This session will offer insight into advocacy efforts to redirect national policy and international funding around this issue. It will also highlight examples from two different countries of how local indigenous groups are tackling the problem one rural community at a time through local governance models.

#### **7) Power and Partnerships in International Grantmaking**

Effective grantmaking is not just about strategies and measurable outcomes. It's also about RELATIONSHIPS. Especially in international grantmaking, factors such as cultural differences and power disparities can make respectful and accountable relationships difficult. This spirited workshop features three panelists deeply committed to developing real partnerships with their grantees. In an open and frank conversation, we'll discuss tough questions like: What does authentic partnership look like? How can grantmaking practices be built to engender it? How do you balance the diverse and sometimes conflicting expectations of grantmakers and the communities they serve? What can US funders do to share power with their grantees?