7TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Glimpses from the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples’ Conference by Terri Hansen

Set against a backdrop of New Mexico’s Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the 7th International Funders for Indigenous Peoples’ conference was nothing short of spectacular.

A very special gathering of people who deeply care gathered with intentions of listening to one another and discovering ways to work together.

“Even though we come here representing donors, non-profit organizations, indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, we share our passions and concerns for the future of Indigenous peoples and the future of the planet,” Jessica Brown of the funding organization New England Biolabs Foundation said.

IFIP’S 7TH ANNUAL AWARD “THE GIVER”

The giver is someone who gives of themselves without hesitation to whoever is in need. It is a natural ability for them to be so selfless. It is admirable. This giver, she holds an old pot which symbolizes her generosity to others. The rim of the pot is decorated in old Iroquois style pottery designs.

About the artist: Cheyanne Doxtador is a Bear Clan of the Oneida Nation. She is originally from the Six Nations Reserve, but is currently living in the community of Akwesasne.

THE RIGHT KIND OF PIONEER

To Indigenous peoples in the Americas, the word ‘pioneer’ might carry a certain meaning. To the peoples who have struggled for centuries to keep their ancestral lands and cultures intact, the early ‘pioneers’ that ‘settled America’ might not be a welcome image. For them, the Garfield Foundation is transforming the meaning of the word itself through its pioneering work with their communities.
This year’s conference theme, Fostering Local to Global Partnerships: Setting the Agenda for the Future of Indigenous Philanthropy reflects those values.

The early April event at the Pueblo of Picuris Hotel Santa Fe drew 150 people from all corners of Earth: Grantmakers, funding organizations, and Indigenous peoples’ representing Bolivia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Peru, the Amazon, Canada and the U.S. They came to tell their stories. Many were stories of injustice. “We hope to live for centuries in a healthy environment,” traditional healer Anank Nunkai of the Ecuadorian Amazon told his audience. “Wearing a smile and holding our hearts in our hands, we need to reconstruct this generation that is in darkness, because tomorrow it will be too late.”

Deforestation by commercial and speculative interests is destroying not only tropical forests but also sacred vines that grow within them, plant medicines Nunkai and his people have relied on since time immemorial to cure their ills. Carlos Macuacua has traveled long way from his Mozambique coastal village. To restore their sea turtles and other subsistence seafoods decimated by overfishing in other countries – a concept nearly incomprehensible to these remote villagers – Macuacua is teaching them they must drastically curtail their sea creatures’ harvest to let their populations come back.

To do their work Nunkai, Macuacua and others need funding. They’re here hoping to interest grantmakers. Even smaller grants can have big impacts in Indigenous communities. “There is the donor and then there are the indigenous grant seekers or indigenous peoples working at the grass roots level,” said Stephen DeNorscia, whose Ringing Rocks Foundation sponsored Nunkai. “Indigenous funders need more personal contact with the indigenous people who are looking for resources and just understanding in general.”

On his part, Nunkai felt honored to share with the funders the wisdom of his ancestors, “weaving the wisdom from our different cultures with honor and respect.”

Sessions covered climate change, the need for adaptation, food security, Indigenous rights, sovereignty, self-determination, and strengthening Indigenous philanthropy giving grantmakers a rare opportunity to learn about the interconnectedness of Indigenous peoples and their environment, and their commitment to protecting the world for future generations. They came away with an increased understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Indigenous communities, of their role as “ancient wisdom keepers,” and the benefits of developing mutually beneficial partnerships.

IFIP asked attendees, “One of the primary purposes of this meeting is to give you a better sense of the unique issues around Indigenous issues and philanthropy.”

The urgency of climate change was central for most of the Indigenous people there. “The caribou need snow to dig in to calve, and that snow is dwindling,” said Gwich’in Sarah James. Thinning ice is making it harder to reach their calving grounds. Her Alaskan village adjoins the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Proposed drilling for oil in the ANWR could decimate these caribou the Gwich’in peoples depend on for everything from food to winter clothing.

“It’s an understatement to say our communities are in crisis,” Native environmental activist Winona LaDuke said. With tribes confronting diabetes epidemics and budget cuts, “the issues of where we’re going to be 20 years from now in terms of climate, in terms of oil, energy policy, food policy, is not on their radar.” She stressed the importance of the ‘re-localization of community,’ a model
of community self-sustainability based on a local economy.
And she emphasized the issue of who owns their seeds.

Last year Hawaii’s traditional farmers sought a 10-year moratorium – it failed to pass – on creating genetically engineered taro, a plant sacred to them and part of their genealogy. “No one has the right to genetically modify our Cosmogenealogy,” they told LaDuke.

“These foods are not just foods … they are our relatives,” she said. “We’ve been fighting the genetic engineering of our wild rice. We’re still victorious.”

Monsanto most aggressively patents GE seeds. They’ve been accused of trying to stop traditional farmers’ practice of collecting and saving Native seeds by writing seed laws some legislators have pushed through subjecting collectors to fees, paperwork, even fines and prosecution unless every variety they collect is individually tested and tracked, a burdensome task.

Keynote speaker, the poet Simon Ortiz said Earth Mother really needs our help, that Indigenous people can play a major role in regenerating the world. He called IFIP “a movement for positive change.”

The final day was at the Santa Ana Pueblo’s Tamaya Resort at the base of the Sandia Mountains, a resort, according to our tour bus driver, considered one of the country’s top five and one of ten in the world. You can believe her. The evening sun turned the Sandia Mountains into a glowing red.

“Even if we have never seen each other, Native people understand one another,” reflected Aaju Peter of Iqaluit, Alaska as she looked out on the desert sunset. “We’re here for a common goal, to reach a solution, to look forward.”

An unexpected highlight during the event was Australia’s agreement to support the UN Indigenous rights declaration adopted by the UN in 2007. Canada, the U.S. and New Zealand are the only countries who have not signed on.

The Right Kind of Pioneer (continued from page 2)

In recognition of consistent leadership in the philanthropic world that demonstrates the value of engaging directly with the people it has identified as ‘effective guardians of biodiversity,’ the Garfield Foundation is the recipient of this year’s IFIP award.

Garfield’s program provides more than $700,000 a year in support to conservation initiatives in the Gran Chaco ecoregion that spans Bolivia, Paraguay, Argentina and the Peruvian Amazon.

The program itself is pioneering new frontiers between Indigenous and the industrialized world through small scale support to communities who otherwise have no access to resources. The foundation is forging new paths for sustainable projects that should inspire interest from other funders.

The IFIP Award was created to not only recognize exemplary collaborations between Indigenous and funding communities, but to write a new history of pioneers who are righting centuries of wrongs.

Susan Berresford, President of the Ford Foundation, received the very first Award in 2005 for her perseverance to build greater commitment to Indigenous peoples from a philanthropic institution. In 2006, IFIP recognized the Kalliopeia Foundation for its integration of spiritual values and Indigenous wisdom into their funding strategies. In 2007, the Christensen Fund was awarded for the promotion and preservation of Indigenous stewardship of cultural and ecological heritage sites. Last year, the IFIP Award was presented for the first time to a foundation based outside the United States, the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation from Toronto, Canada, who received the award in recognition of their support to First Nations, Inuit and other Northern Peoples to shape public policy reflective of and reinforcing cultural priorities and traditions.

Garfield Foundation
see www.garfieldfoundation.org
Previous Sessions

September 20-25, 2008, EGA Fall Retreat, New Paltz, New York

IFIP participated extensively as a member of the Host Committee, and organized the opening address by Mohawk leader Kevin Deer, a Climate Change ad hoc session, and a pre-site visit to the Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community, which was EGA’s highest attended pre-site visit.

October 3-12, 2008, IUCN, Barcelona, Spain

IFIP participated in the IUCN, World Conservation Congress, the world’s largest environmental conference and coordinated their first session on Indigenous Philanthropy. In addition, IFIP was provided with an exhibit booth thanks to the generous support of Yale University’s School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and The Leitner Fund. IFIP received Ford and Yale grant support to participate in this event.


Attended and spoke at the meeting that brought over 40 NGO’s and 12 donors together to explore collaborative strategies for fast moving action toward “actualizing” the profound principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

May 5th 2009, Council on Foundations – Climate Justice: Understanding the effects of global warming on marginalized communities

This session brought together the philanthropic community in dialogue with environmental, indigenous and immigrants’ rights leaders to discuss how to broaden the climate movement to more diverse voices and interest by focusing on economic and social justice issues and linking to new drivers for climate solutions. These leaders brought a new perspective and among the grantmaking community. In partnership with the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP).

Moderator: Chet Tchozewski, Global Greengrants Fund

Speakers: Robert Bullard, PhD, Environmental Justice Resource Center at Clark Atlanta University; Danielle Deane, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; Jihan Gearon, Indigenous Environmental Network

May 18-29th, 2009, United Nations, New York, NY

IFIP participated in this year’s UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues titled Indigenous Voices at the United Nations, a gathering that brings over 2,000 Indigenous representatives from around the world to NYC every year to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights.

IFIP participated on the funders panel for Tribal Link Foundation:

Tribal Link’s Project Access supports Indigenous Peoples’ participation in international meetings and conferences where decisions are being made that affect their rights, cultures and livelihoods and is done in cooperation with the UN Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Trainings are lead by some of the world’s most experienced indigenous rights experts, and are geared toward giving participants practical knowledge and skills that can be used to advance the work of indigenous peoples.

IFIP also spoke in a “side event” on the Actualization and Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which was organized by Tebtebba Foundation and International Forum on Globalization.

AK Seminar on Private Philanthropy, Indigenous Capacity, and Environmental Stewardship, Sept 28th and 29th in Anchorage, Alaska

Overall Seminar Goals

• Provide grant seekers tools and resources for securing private foundation grants

• Expose funders to Alaska Native cultures and organizational entities

• Educate funders about critical environmental health, natural resource management, conservation & sustainability issues facing Alaska Native communities

• Share successes & challenges in Indigenous philanthropy, from funder & grant seeker perspectives

• Explore strategies to support Alaska Native-led stewardship and sustainability work

• Build Relationships: among grant seekers, between funders & grant seekers to reach common goals

For more info see www.alaskaconservation.org

Environmental Grantmakers Association (EGA) Annual Retreat-IFIP is co-sponsoring the two sessions below.

Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a Key Strategy for Challenging Climate Change

Climate change threatens indigenous peoples globally including Arctic dwellers, Pacific Islanders, South American and African forest peoples, and communities facing energy resource extraction and development. In September 2007, a new human rights instrument—the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, was approved by the General Assembly with key provisions, including the right to “Free Prior and Informed Consent” before developments take place on indigenous lands and territories. This session will show how, when actually implemented, the Declaration not only can support the livelihoods, cultures, and traditions of indigenous peoples but also mitigate climate change and protect ecosystems.

Making it work, Making it real: Effective Collaboration

Lessons learned in Indigenous grantmaking—global to local perspective w/the most recent “aha’s” coming from the Alaska learning institute. Why direct grantmaking to Indigenous groups is vital to conservation success, and how to do it effectively. Perspectives from those that support the work (funders & intermediaries) and those doing the work on the ground (NGO’s or tribal entities).

For more info see www.ega.org

IFIP consultant Sam Moskwa will hold a session on behalf of IFIP at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Studies (AIATSIS) 2009 National Conference in Canberra.

For more info see www.aiatsis.gov.au

OCTOBER 2009

BIONEERS Oct 16-18 2009, San Rafael, Ca- The Bioneers Conference is a leading-edge forum—At this premiere environmental conference, social and scientific innovators focus on solutions inspired by nature and human ingenuity. IFIP is holding a session on Indigenous Philanthropy.

For more info see www.bioneers.org

Building Real Partnerships with Indigenous Communities meeting by invite only-IFIP is an Executive Committee Planning Group member for this meeting that is taking place Oct 19 and 20th in San Francisco.
In 2005, the Foundation Center reported that US foundations gave $3.8 billion for international projects; only 0.003 percent supported indigenous-related projects. This trend must change, for, as the earth faces crises from indiscriminate and often abusive use of resources, some indigenous peoples who have sustained a deep connection with the natural world have the potential to play a critical role in our efforts to protect the planet. The Colombian shaman Don Luciano Mutumbajoy articulated this reality so clearly in a session at the 2001 EGA Retreat: “While we have a great deal to learn from you about technology in terms of saving the earth, what you need to learn from us is the spiritual technology of saving the earth.”

SPIRITUAL TECHNOLOGY

In 1990, BBC reporter Alan Ereira filmed “From the Heart of the World – The Elder Brothers’ Warming,” a documentary about the Kogi tribe, a little-known indigenous community in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of Colombia who consider themselves caretakers of the earth. In one scene, the Kogi mamas, or shamans, say that they can see the end of the world coming, and that they, the elder brothers, need to get a message to us, the younger brothers, to do something to change. From an intimacy with their isolated and extraordinarily diverse region, they had been able to read the entire unraveling of the earth’s ecosystems caused by global warming.

Their deep concern led them to communicate with the outside world through that film and, when their message wasn’t heeded, to travel to Washington, DC and New York in 2006 for events sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme. Kogi representatives continued to reinforce their message at the 2008 UN Climate Change Conference in Poznan, Poland:

We are concerned about the path of destruction being invented by the scientific orientation and so we ask of the present governments: If the second tsunami or third hole appears in the sky, do your scientific advisers have the knowledge to avert this catastrophe? Is it that you understand fully...the secrets of the land? Do you control the winds? Do you know the power of the waters? Be respectful of what you do not know and what you cannot dominate with your rational formulations.

These indigenous leaders give just a few examples of ancient wisdom that lives in these cultures, giving us a glimpse of the “spiritual technology” that holds important keys to all of our survival. Clearly, the paradigm for how we have lived up until now cannot work forever. We need examples – not necessarily of returning to total simplicity or living in a hut but of how to live in a reciprocal relationship with the earth. This insight is very sophisticated, very current, and very practical—and therefore, very worthy for environmental grantmakers to explore further as part of the broader vision of grantmaking for the environmental movement.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF LIFE

What is this knowledge that some indigenous peoples hold that can benefit the rest of humanity? Perhaps the word “consciousness” might best express it. For some indigenous people, particularly those more isolated from modern culture, traditional knowledge is still a part of their cosmology or world view. It is a way of being, a state of being, and in some ways, a state of grace.

In the Q’ero tradition of the Andes, for example, one of the fundamental guiding principles is Ayni, best translated as reciprocity and respect. It implies “the conscious and willing acknowledgement of the interconnection between humans and the natural world,” as Dr. James Williams writes in The Andean Codex: Adventures and Initiations Among the Peruvian Shamans. Ayni often takes the form of ritual (continued on page 6)
Ancient Wisdom for Today’s Earth Challenges
(continued from page 5)

offerings to the earth and to all of nature, to return something for all that has been given to sustain their lives. In this way, life is a constant process of receiving and giving back in appreciation and gratitude. Historically, in traditional cultures like the Q’ero and many others, there is the general understanding that humans, plants, and animals share a common spirit-life, and that the earth is a living, breathing organism. In Western culture, it is similar to the Gaia principle. However, the difference between holding the concept and living it fully from moment to moment can mean the difference between environmental degradation and sustainability.

For some indigenous peoples, these are fundamental principles of life, and ultimately, of survival. How we translate these principles to modern culture has yet to be defined, although offsetting one’s carbon footprint is a beginning point for a Western translation of Ayni. In traditional indigenous communities, however, these principles are so deeply ingrained that these cultures often react to the impacts of climate change in very creative ways, drawing on traditional knowledge and other technologies for adaptation strategies that could help society at large to cope with today’s earth challenges.

In Bangladesh, for example, villagers are creating floating vegetable gardens to protect their livelihoods from flooding. In Guyana, tribal people are moving from their savannah homes to forest areas during droughts and have started planting cassava, their main staple crop, on moist floodplains which are normally too wet for other crops. In North America, some indigenous groups are focusing on wind and solar power on tribal lands as the key resource for energy, replacing fossil fuel-derived energy and limiting greenhouse gas emissions.

"The most endangered species in the Amazon is the shaman"
said Dr. Mark Plotkin

the importance of protecting this knowledge for the benefit of all before it is gone forever.

A second critical strategy is the communication and integration of traditional knowledge in ways that mainstream individuals, communities, and corporations can grasp. The Pachamama Alliance, an NGO preserving rainforests by empowering indigenous people as well as fostering a new global vision of sustainability, provides a rare example of this effort by incorporating indigenous principles into their innovative multimedia environmental symposium, “Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream,” which has been presented to diverse audiences around the world.

A third strategy involves ensuring that indigenous peoples who embody this traditional knowledge are at the table at key global environmental conferences and summits. Recognizing their emergence as important voices in defining a sustainable future and funding their ability to participate in key events can enable us to begin to integrate their sustainable cosmology into our own. The integration of ancient wisdom that can lead to a shift in consciousness is a subtle process, one that is not easily defined. Funding indigenous projects in all of the key areas is just one way to forward our environmental agenda. With creative approaches and partnering with Indigenous leaders, no doubt more can be discovered to better understand and integrate the “spiritual technology” of preserving the earth.

Foundations are invited to the upcoming International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) Conference in British Columbia, May 3-5, 2010; contact evelyn@internationalfunders.org or view www.internationalfunders.org. IFIP is also available to advise funders in effective funding for indigenous initiatives. 

Reprinted in Sacred Fire Magazine and Environmental Grantmakers Association (EGA) magazine
Building Indigenous Women’s Leadership – 1, 2, 5 women at a time

By Nikhil Aziz, Executive Director of Grassroots International

My colleague Saulo Araujo and I were recently in Guatemala visiting our partner CONIC (National Coordination of Indigenous Peoples & Campesinos). CONIC’s staff took us to visit a local community they have been working with in the village of Cocorval, in the Department of Chimaltenango, over an hour’s drive from Guatemala City on a “chicken bus.”

Grassroots International has supported a CONIC cooperative project in a different region of Guatemala, on the other side of Lake Atitlan from Cocorval. The women we met knew that but were quick to appreciate our support for CONIC (and to remind their neighbors) that Grassroots’ support for CONIC means that their village benefits as well, even if indirectly, through the technical assistance they get from the CONIC staff.

The women of the community banded together 12 years ago to form a cooperative - Juno Qawach - to advocate for better services from the government, such as credit. Marcelina Sirien Xinico and Esteban Maroquin Sirin (Esteban is a woman), who are on the Board of the cooperative told us that they grow broccoli, cabbage, and beans, working with the men of their village. But, they said quickly, the leadership of the cooperative is all women, and so are almost all of the 200 or so members.

Their cooperative is one of the many that CONIC works with across the country, providing technical assistance on agroecology, political education, credit and financial assistance, leadership development and advocacy. Saulo and I talked with Marcelina and Esteban about why they decided to form a cooperative and work with CONIC.

Marcelina: I had a lot of personal problems with my husband who was an alcoholic and I needed to make sure we had enough for our children. So I talked to my neighbors like Esteban as I felt it would be better for us to work together, and that way we might have a better chance of being heard and having our problems solved. So we got about 15-20 women together.

Esteban: I believe we need to have a better life for ourselves and our community. We often had lots of arguments in the family because we lacked resources and that affected the way we were with each other. So, I decided to be proactive and do something about it and to change things.

Marcelina: One of our main goals was to advocate for our rights with the government. The government has programs to benefit the community but unless we know what they are and how we can avail of them no one is going to hand them to us on a platter. Alvaro Colom (the president) came here during the elections and made many promises but then we didn’t see anything since the elections. But since we registered as a cooperative, mobilized our people and applied for programs we are eligible for, we’ve been more successful. And now, we even have a roof on our community center.

(continued on page 8)
Building Indigenous Women’s Leadership – 1, 2, 5 women at a time (continued from page 7)

Esteban: Most of the women in the village and this region make artisanal crafts, like the traditional huipils. But we need credit for getting the things we need to make them. Some of the women know how to weave, while others know the designs, and so we collaborate to make the huipils - it takes 2 days to weave the cotton and another 15 to make the design. This is how we support our families along with the food we grow.

Marcelina: We were the first in our region to come together to form the cooperative. The men in our village supported our efforts and joined us, unlike in other places where men are often threatened by women’s leadership and initiative. But seeing our success, especially in obtaining government support, many other villages in the area have now followed suit.

Esteban: We have now been on the Board for 12 years. Our cooperative assembly meets every two years but refuses to let the five of us retire! There are other very capable women in the village that could be on the Board but the problem is that we already do.

Marcelina: But there are younger women, who are more educated, like Esteban’s daughter. I think they will be more likely to step up in the future and help to lead the cooperative. We need them to.

IFIP MEMBER HIGHLIGHT (continued from page 7)

including the rights to food, water and land.
We also engage in Education, Communications and Advocacy in the U.S. to promote understanding of and engagement with the global resource rights movement by the U.S. public, with a view to impacting U.S. policies.

2) Can you share a lesson learned from working with Indigenous communities?

“When you sow maize, throw four seeds at a time: one for the wild animals, another for people with a taste for what’s not theirs, another for festival days and another for the family. Maize is not a business but food for survival, our sustenance and our happiness. When we plant it we bless it to ask for a good harvest for all. But we have recently found out that native maize varieties have been contaminated with transgenic seeds. This means that what our indigenous peoples took thousands of years to develop can be destroyed in no time at all by companies that trade in life.”

— Aldo González Rojas, Zapotec leader, Oaxaca

As an ally and supporter, we develop long term partnerships with indigenous organizations based on shared values and political perspectives. One such partner is the Union of Organizations of the Sierra Juarez of Oaxaca (UNOSJO), profiled below. UNOSJO has been the leading indigenous voice in efforts to unmask the presence of genetically modified (GM) corn in the Oaxacan countryside, and undertook the research to detect the first traces of GM corn in Zapotec communities.

One of the main lessons from our partners is the holistic approach to critical issues of climate justice and resource rights. The unbalanced demand for resources in the Global North – where food is above all a business and natural resources are commodities to be traded – has contributed to climate change and encroached on the traditional territories and resources of indigenous communities. Biodiversity has been jeopardized and land and water resources have been misused for industrial agriculture, predatory mining and hydroelectric projects, often without the informed consent of local indigenous populations.

The indigenous concept of “el buen vivir” – or living well in harmony with nature – has taught us about supporting solutions based on traditional knowledge and shared resources. In this perspective, the stewardship of land and water by indigenous people, peasants and Afro-descendant communities is critical for the future of humankind, as these communities have lived sustainably for generations. They are the source of inspiration for other communities, urban and rural, to develop ways of sustaining themselves without jeopardizing future generations.

3) Can you share one of your grantees and why their work is making a difference?

The Union of Organizations of the Sierra Juarez of Oaxaca (UNOSJO) is one of Grassroots’ partners in Oaxaca state. UNOSJO is a Zapotec indigenous organization established in 1990 by 26 regional and community-based indigenous campesino organizations in the Juarez Mountains. UNOSJO fosters locally controlled, environmentally and culturally appropriate development. The Zapotes are one of the most numerous indigenous ethnicities in the region. UNOSJO works to promote and defend the resource rights of the indigenous communities of the Juarez Mountains. Most notable is their work protecting the forests from illegal logging, protecting watersheds and access to water, and defending collective indigenous land rights.

UNOSJO is an active participant in the National Indigenous Congress (CNI), the Network in Defense of Corn, and in the Mexican Coalition in Defense of Water (COMDA).

In the project Building Zapotec Territorial Autonomy, UNOSJO is working through community radio, community workshops and regional forums to stimulate a process of education, reflection and organizing in the Zapotec communities of the Juarez Mountains of Oaxaca. This educational program is designed to permit Zapotecs to assess the real threats posed by globalization to their control over the natural resources in their territories and develop a strategy to defend them. UNOSJO is also working closely with other Grassroots partners on developing sustainable agroecological production methods and community statutes to defend communal property rights in Zapotec territories.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership in International Funders for Indigenous peoples is as an individual donor or institution concerned about the livelihood, culture, and well being of Indigenous Peoples and their communities. Membership is open to individuals who are donors themselves, individuals working in member institutions, or working for organizations that are primarily grantmakers. As a philanthropic affinity group of the Council on Foundations, IFIP members are dedicated to expanding their grantmaking for international Indigenous projects and communities.

International Funders for Indigenous Peoples and its members work to:

• **Increase knowledge and understanding** of the unique issues related to funding project that involve Indigenous people by providing a baseline of relevant information.

• **Encourage innovation and increase effectiveness** within the grantmaking community by facilitating networking opportunities and an exchange of ideas and practical tools.

• **Foster a cross-disciplinary understanding** of Indigenous People and the holistic contexts in which they live and work.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Name: ________________________________

Foundation: __________________________________________________________________

Title/Position: __________________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________________

City: _____________________________ State: ___________ Zip: ____________

Phone: ______________________________ Fax: ____________________________

Cell: ______________________________ Email: ____________________________

Organization Type (check one):

☐ Public Foundation  ☐ Corporate Foundation  ☐ Private Foundation  ☐ Individual Donor

☐ Independent Foundation  ☐ Community Foundation  ☐ Family Foundation  ☐ Other

Year established: _____________ Yearly assets: ______________ Yearly grant level: ______________

Yearly grant level given to Indigenous projects: ______________________________

Please describe the Indigenous work that you are supporting? __________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________

Application Type (check one):  ☐ New Member  ☐ Renewing Member

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Charge my:  ☐ Visa  ☐ Mastercard  ☐ American Express

Card Number: ________________________________________________________________________________

Expiration Date: ______________  Security Code: __________________________

Name (Print): ________________________________________________________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________________________________________________________
MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

- **Founding Membership** *(up to 10 representatives):*  
  - Acknowledgement as a major sponsor at all IFIP events.
  - Receive all the benefits as a Sustaining Member of IFIP.
  - Waiver of conference registration fee for five (5) participants at all IFIP conferences.
  - Reserved seating during all conference events.
  - Receive ten (10) complimentary copies of the *Indigenous Peoples Funders Resource Guide* and…
  - 75% discount for additional copies ordered.
  - Complimentary subscription to *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, a leading publication on current indigenous rights issues with feature articles focused on themes of concern to indigenous peoples.
  - Receive leading research reports on Indigenous issues.
  - Plus, all of the benefits listed below.

- **Sustaining Membership** *(up to 6 representatives):*  
  - Recognition on our website, newsletters and press releases.
  - Invitation to join us in making session presentations at donor conferences.
  - Waiver of conference registration fee for two (2) participants at all IFIP conferences.
  - Receive six (6) complimentary copies of the *Indigenous Peoples Funders Resource Guide* and 50% discount for additional copies ordered.
  - Complimentary subscription to *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, a leading publication on current indigenous rights issues with feature articles focused on themes of concern to indigenous peoples.
  - Receive leading research reports on Indigenous issues.
  - Plus, all of the benefits listed below.

- **Esteemed Membership** *(up to 3 representatives):*  
  - Recognition on our website, newsletters and press releases.
  - Invitation to join us in making session presentations at donor conferences.
  - Receive three (3) complimentary copies of the *Indigenous Peoples Funders Resource Guide* and 25% discount for additional copies ordered.
  - Receive leading research reports on Indigenous issues.
  - Complimentary subscription to *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, a leading publication on current indigenous rights issues with feature articles focused on themes of concern to indigenous peoples.
  - Plus, all of the benefits listed below.

- **Individual Membership:**  
  - Receive our newsletter *The Sharing Circle* and monthly e-newsletter, *The Sharing Network*.
  - Receive one (1) complimentary copy of the *Indigenous Peoples Funders Resource Guide*.
  - 20% discount for *Alliance*, the leading international magazine on philanthropy and social investment.
  - Access to IFIP’s Members Only section which contains a Members Forum that discusses a variety of thematic and regional issues.
  - Access to the Member’s List serve which provides an opportunity to share news with other members.
  - Opportunity to be in the “IFIP Member Highlight” section of e-newsletter which shares information on your program to other members.

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**PLEASE SEND FORM AND CHECKS TO:**  
International Funders for Indigenous Peoples, P.O. Box 1040, Akwesasne, New York 13655  
Tel: (518) 358-9500  Fax: (518) 358-9544  Email: ifip@internationalfunders.org  Internet: www.internationalfunders.org
Standing on the Global Stage

I

FIP took a giant step toward its mission to amplify the voices of Indigenous communities to the world with its first-time participation in the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WWC) in Barcelona, Spain. The International Union for Conservation of Nature is the world’s oldest and largest global environmental network.

The Christensen Fund and Ford Foundation made it possible for IFIP to travel to the event and provide strong support for Indigenous Peoples’ issues and concerns.

As a result, IFIP sponsored a major reception and several workshops that were heavily attended. A “Global Green Grants Fund” workshop provided an opportunity for Indigenous peoples representatives to learn about funding support for achieving healthy environments in such areas as Mexico, Brazil, and Southeast Asia. “Rights and Resources Group” presented “the experience and perspectives of Indigenous peoples on climate change issues.” An “Australia Tropical Forest Institute” session followed up on a previous day’s workshop, “Indigenous Cultural Action for Biological and Cultural Conservation and Human Well Being.”

Given that Indigenous Peoples’ human rights issues are inextricably interwoven with global issues of ecological health and biodiversity, IFIP understood the vital importance that their voices be heard at the global Congress.

As one of the many representatives of donor organizations attending the Congress as well as a member of IFIP’s Board of Trustees, Ken Wilson of the Christensen Fund said that “in numerous ways, and to a degree unimaginable only ten years ago, the IUCN and its members are increasingly and very concretely recognizing the myriad ways in which the diversity and vitality of the planet are served by deep and honest alliances with Indigenous Peoples.”

“Another manifestation of this was the passing with 98% member support of a resolution on the respectful joint management of Sacred Natural Sites and the publication of a set of guidelines on how to do this developed through long and careful work with the guardians of such sites from around the world, many of whom also attended the congress.”

IFIP was provided with an exhibit booth at the WWC thanks to generous support from Yale University’s School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and The Leitner Fund. Our booth, located in the cluster called the Journey on Bio-Cultural Diversity and Indigenous People, sat next to the Global Diversity Foundation for optimal networking.

“The IFIP booth created a much-needed space for Indigenous organizations to leave their materials for IUCN participants,” recalls IFIP Executive Director, Evelyn Arce-White.

“We also had several donors come up to say they wanted to join us to understand how to support sustainable efforts with Indigenous communities.”

Principles in Funding Indigenous Amazonian Communities

The following principles were outcomes of a joint meeting between International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) and Amazon Alliance in Washington D.C.

• Free Prior Informed Consent—Funders frequently violate the right to free, prior and informed consent by deciding what they want to do in an indigenous territory before consulting with indigenous peoples and getting their consent on the project goals and design.

• United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples — This declaration outlines a very clear set of indigenous rights, and should be used extensively by funders as a resource for guiding their policies and procedures.

• Work with Legitimate Indigenous Organizations — It is very important to work with legitimate, elected indigenous organizations. Insist that indigenous organizations demonstrate their legitimacy.

• Coordinate Activities with National and Regional Indigenous Organizations — Even local projects should fit within and contribute to regional and national indigenous priorities and strategies as much as possible.

• Respect Indigenous Life-plans — Most indigenous communities and organizations have developed life-plans. All projects should be clearly aligned with these life-plans.

• Indigenous Involvement in Decision-Making Processes — Representatives of indigenous peoples should be involved in designing funder priorities and projects even in the earliest conceptual stages of strategy-building.

• Flexibility to Adapt to Shifting Priorities — As much as possible, projects in indigenous territory should be flexible enough to adapt to rapidly changing situations and priorities.

• Build Institutional Capacity — Building the institutional capacity of indigenous organizations should be a clear objective of

(continued on page 12)
For Indigenous Peoples in Latin America Access to Resources Remains Challenging

Mac Chapin, Center for the Support of Native Lands

In the 1960s, national governments of various Amazonian countries – in particular Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador – launched colonization projects into the tropical lowlands. Almost immediately, the Indians of this region began organizing themselves to fend off the influx of people invading their lands. A true Indigenous Movement made its appearance at this time and gained force over the next two decades. Multi-ethnic confederations appeared in the nine countries sharing the Greater Amazon region, and these eventually joined hands to form the Coordinating Body of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA).

Today, one sees a virtual flurry of organizational activity among the indigenous peoples throughout Latin America: a recent count listed over 800 indigenous organizations at the local, regional, national, and international levels. This all takes money, of course, and as the Movement grows in size and complexity, its needs grow apace. Where does the financial support come from?

From the start, virtually all of the funding for indigenous organizations in Latin America has come from Europe. It has been supplied by national governments (through their foreign ministries), NGOs, religious groups, and more recently the European Union. Holland, Denmark, Norway, Germany, and Spain all have official policies for work with indigenous peoples; most other countries – Austria, Belgium, Italy, etc. – have provisions for assisting indigenous peoples but no formal policies. Recently, the European Union has developed a policy for working with indigenous peoples along with various pots of money to implement its policy.

European assistance reaches indigenous peoples in Latin America in several ways: from foreign ministries through local embassies to indigenous organizations; from European embassies to local non-indigenous NGOs that work with indigenous organizations; from foreign ministries in Europe to European NGOs located in Europe that then pass the money on to one of their offices in Latin America or directly to indigenous organizations; and from several centralized mechanisms in the European Union to a collection of NGOs and indigenous groups working in partnerships. Taken together, a substantial amount of financial aid flows out of Europe and lands in indigenous hands.

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The United States has nothing comparable to the European system either in magnitude or in complexity; it also lacks the interest shown by the Europeans. The U.S. counterpart of Europe’s foreign ministries, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), has no policy for dealing with indigenous peoples (although it does refer to them in several documents as a “target group”). The only money USAID provides for work with indigenous peoples is routed through conservationist NGOs (World Wildlife Fund, The Nature Conservancy, etc.) and consulting firms such as Chemonics Inc. and International Resources Group (IRG).

Another potential source of support in the U.S. is with private foundations. These come in all shapes and sizes, with different agendas and political orientations and internal structures, and it is difficult to generalize about them. Yet one common feature is that indigenous peoples are not regular recipients of their grants. A recent study by The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development notes that less than 0.3 percent of the total charitable giving of the larger donors ends up in Indian hands in the United States. In Latin America the amount is much less; and while grants to Native Americans in the U.S. are given directly to Indian organizations, virtually everything sent in the direction of indigenous peoples in Latin America passes through intermediaries, and these are almost invariably environmental NGOs.

Several large foundations – Ford and MacArthur, among others – have made attempts to work with indigenous peoples in Latin America, but their efforts have been uneven and, in concert with USAID’s strategy, their grants have been channeled through intermediaries. Several smaller foundations, such as the Moriah Fund and the Garfield Foundation, have had programs that support indigenous groups directly or through reliable intermediaries, and these are to be lauded; but their impact remains modest in the larger scheme of things.

European support of indigenous peoples in Latin America is by no means perfect, but it is effective in two major ways. First, the Europeans stress “process” over discrete projects with a short time frame (as U.S. foundations tend to stress), and their support has been continuous over decades, through good and bad times alike. This approach stresses capacity building, training, and education, with the underlying principle that the indigenous groups need to strengthen their ability to deal with the non-indigenous world more effectively.

Second, most European agencies try to respond to the needs of the indigenous communities rather than impose their own agendas. In the environmental sector, for example, they focus on sustainable development, systems of fresh potable water, and other measures sought by the communities; this is in sharp contrast to the environmental programs of many U.S. foundations, which highlight biodiversity conservation.

My research confirms what many of us have known for a long time: indigenous organizations face tremendous challenges in accessing resources that can help their communities sustain their cultures and lifestyles.
NAP AND IFIP INDIGENOUS
Giving Shared Principles Workshop

In a collaborative first, conference participants from the Native Americans in Philanthropy (NAP) and the IFIP annual conferences joined together to explore some important questions: What are the shared principles of Indigenous giving and what are some challenges and opportunities? The workshop’s goal was to develop a list of the Indigenous Giving Principles, which then used as a new benchmark for donors to consider with their national and international indigenous grantmaking portfolios.

Over 170 people participated in the workshop with about three quarters of the group identifying as Native American or Indigenous. The IFIP component brought diverse indigenous participants from five of the world’s continents.

[continued on page 15]
## Giving Principles of Indigenous Philanthropy

### Condor to Eagle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reciprocity</th>
<th>Foundations are committed to the Indigenous culture of reciprocity. They acknowledge and recognize that:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>- Giving and receiving is interconnected and organic;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- We are a world family - the north and south hemisphere are connected</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- We are a holistic family that honours and connects with elders and spirituality</td>
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<td>- The natural resources are our family and our time of earth is limited, so healing is our future</td>
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<th>Respect</th>
<th>Foundations give dynamic and inclusive investments directly to indigenous groups. They are based on processes of:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Empowerment and courage</td>
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<td>- Transparency; access and open processes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Risk taking, flexibility and adaptability</td>
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<td>- Investing more than money</td>
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<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Foundations are committed, passionate and courageous champions of Indigenous needs’. They work with:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The UN Declaration of Indigenous Rights</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Seek organizational indigenous representation</td>
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<tr>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>Foundations seek long term engagement through learning relationships They seek:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>- The meeting points of the ‘conversation’ in livelihood, security, empowerment and rights.</td>
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<td>- Organizational indigenous representation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Shared relationships based on cultural respect not power</td>
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* Outcome was synthesized by IFIP Consultant Sam Moskwa of Australian Grantmakers Services
The Sharing Circle is a newsletter for the members of the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples. IFIP is an association of grantmakers who support, or are interested in supporting, projects involving Indigenous people worldwide. IFIP and its members strive to:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of the unique issues related to funding projects that involve Indigenous peoples by providing a baseline of information on issues relevant to the Indigenous context.
- Encourage innovation and increase effectiveness within the grantmaking community by facilitating networking opportunities and an ongoing exchange of ideas and practical tools.
- Foster a cross-disciplinary understanding of the Indigenous peoples and the holistic context in which they live and work. IFIP members represent such diverse funding disciplines as environmental conservation, health, economic development, and human rights.