



## INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY NETWORK

The Indigenous Biodiversity Network (BioIndio) was formed in Geneva, Switzerland, in October 1993, by Indigenous representatives attending the First Intergovernmental Committee on the Convention on Biological Diversity held since the Rio Conference in June, 1993. BioIndio is a growing network of global aboriginal groups and organizations working together to protect biological diversity through active Indigenous participation in the formulation of policies, laws and programs relating to biodiversity protection, including ratification and implementation of the Biodiversity Convention. To strengthen the role of Indigenous peoples and their communities in biodiversity protection, First Nations have to forge international connections. Presently, BioIndio is working to establish a non-centralized structure and reaching out to native groups and organizations from the four corners of the world to discuss cooperation at the global level.

BioIndio was motivated by the need of having direct Aboriginal presence and autonomous voice on the Biodiversity Convention's implementation phase. Negotiations of the convention did not include Indigenous peoples even though the richest ecosystem, biological and genetic diversity is usually found on Indigenous territories. BioIndio will work to ensure Indigenous participation in the implementation of the convention and seeks to cooperate with NGO's and international

agencies to improve its implementation at the international level. While the convention will be a major focus, BioIndio will also serve to support a range of Indigenous initiatives on biological diversity protection around the world.

BioIndio is made up by:

Asian Indigenous Women's Network  
Asociación de Derecho Ambiental de la Región Inka-Perú  
Congreso General Guayami, Panamá  
Cultural Conservancy, USA  
Cultural Survival, Canadá  
Sobrevivencia, Paraguay  
SAIIC, USA  
Gabriel Muyuy, Indigenous Senator of Colombia

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## PEOPLES OF THE RAIN FORESTS HOLD GLOBAL CONFERENCE

Representatives of Indigenous organizations from tropical rainforests around the world met at the Second Conference of the Worldwide Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Rain Forests held in Iquitos, Peru, from August 25 to 31. The conference, organized by the Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin (COICA), was a success not only because of the large number of participating organizations but also due to the decisions that were reached.

The acknowledgment of Indigenous autonomy was the central theme during the Second Conference which included the participation of 80 representatives from 26 different organizations from the Americas, Africa and Asia. The members agreed on a resolution that seeks

to apply the recommendations made in the 1991 U.N. meeting in Nuux, Greenland, which focused on the right of Indigenous peoples to govern themselves through their own laws, social norms and cultural values in a territory designated as their own. A second resolution issued at the conference asks for the ratification of covenant 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) also dealing with indigenous self-determination.

The Alliance was formed during the First Conference held in February 1992, in Penang, Malaysia. The Alliance seeks to influence the development policies of governments by urging law makers to respect the rights of Indigenous peoples whose livelihood is tied to the forests.