

December 5, 2019

Minister Jonathan Wilkinson
Minister of Environment and Climate
Government of Canada

Re: Article 6 and Indigenous Rights

Dear Minister Wilkinson,

On behalf of the Indigenous Climate Action Youth Delegation, representing Denesūłiné, Cree, Coast Salish, Tla'amin and Nuu-Chah-Nulth Indigenous peoples, with the support of the USA SustainUs Indigenous youth delegation, attending the United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP) 25, in Madrid, Spain, December 2-13, 2019, we call upon the Government of Canada to address our concerns surrounding Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

As it stands, Article 6 is disproportionately focused on market-based climate solutions and lacks safeguards for human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Carbon markets will further enable the colonial legacy of dispossession, privatization, violence against Indigenous women and girls, and destruction of Indigenous lands and culture for fossil fuel extraction. These extractive economies harm not only our communities but on the ecosystems that our Peoples have stewarded and relied on for generations.

We call upon the Government of Canada to act in accordance with its own laws and international obligations as signatories of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) to ensure that Article 6 respects human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples. UNDRIP, Article 10, clearly defines your obligations to uphold Indigenous Peoples' right to Free Prior and Informed Consent, a principle that must be reflected in all aspects of climate solutions coming out of the COP25.

It is our view that in its current state, Article 6 does not promote viable climate solutions or the necessary human and Indigenous Rights protections to ensure true climate justice. Relying heavily on market-based solutions will only further delay the transition out of a fossil fuel economy while simultaneously allowing continued human and Indigenous rights abuses.

There must be increased recognition of non-market solutions that are grounded in the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It is well known that 80% of the world's biodiversity exists within recognized Indigenous lands and territories. In addition, the IPCC has also recognized carbon sinks are often located on Indigenous lands and territories. This is not happenstance, but is the result of millennia of stewardship founded in deep, spiritual connections with our lands and territories and not predicated on modern economic systems. We have proven our peoples' expertise and knowledge in developing successful non-market solutions that surpass current carbon market mechanisms. For these reasons, our rights are essential to mitigating emissions, protecting critical biodiversity and upholding tenets of climate justice.

As Indigenous youth, we are not only inheriting the current climate crisis but also the legacy of colonization, marginalization, violence against Indigenous women and girls, and disposition of our lands and territories. As young indigenous women, this legacy looks like gendered violence that further exploits our lands. It is critical that the rulebook for implementing the Paris Accord does not continue to perpetuate these harms on our generation and the seven generations to come.

We thank you for your attention to this matter, and we implore the Government of Canada to take action on addressing our grave concerns with Article 6 of the Paris Rule Book. We support the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change's (IIPFCC) proposed language recommendations under Article 6.2 of, *"Ensure that use of Article 6 ~~should~~ respect[s] human rights [and the rights of Indigenous Peoples] in its application."*

If you would like to discuss this further or have any questions or concerns we ask that you contact Eriel Deranger, ICA Executive Director at eriel@indigenousclimateaction.com.

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Youth Delegation,
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With support of the SustainUS Youth Delegation

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