Thank you Mr Co-Chair.

This statement is made on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity.

As we said in our general opening statement this morning, the IIFB acknowledges and appreciates the efforts of the Executive Secretary in developing a draft plan of action for customary sustainable use.

We do have some reflections on the document and suggestions to further improve it, which we would like to share with you, and we will also send our contributions to you in writing.

Concerning the draft recommendations:
We generally support the four recommendations to COP12.
With regard to recommendation 4 (funding and technical support for developing and least developed countries, and indigenous and local communities for the implementation of programmes and projects that promote customary sustainable use of biological diversity): while we understand this recommendation is to be read in this way already, we just want to make it very clear that it is important to ensure that all indigenous peoples can have access to funding for such initiatives, regardless of whether or not they may reside in a developed, developing or least developed country.

On the annex we have the following contributions:

On the Objective:
We are wondering whether the objective should not read “implementation of article 10(c)”, rather than “implementation of Article 8(j)”, as there already is a Programme Of Work on 8(j) and this new plan deals specifically with customary sustainable use?

We also have a couple of additions regarding the General and specific principles:

On Principle (b) we suggest to change ‘many’ into ‘all’ as all indigenous peoples depend on biodiversity directly
On Principle (d) we propose to add ‘with respect for the traditional institutions and authorities’ after indigenous peoples and local communities (para continues with “and with a focus on women (…)”.)
On Principle (f) we propose to expand and strengthen this principle as follows: ‘Respect, secure and protect the territoriality of indigenous peoples’ (and then continue as normal).

Moving on to Section IV, the draft plan of action in the table including the proposed actors, actions, outcomes and indicators:

We support the outline for Task a) on incorporating Customary Sustainable Use in NBSAPs, the only comment we have is to use ‘full and effective participation’ in the second column (main actors) – to be consistent with the 5th column (indicator).

Regarding Task b) on community-based initiatives:
We suggest that support from Parties and others for our initiatives could consist of more than funding only, as we are seeking active and effective partnerships and collaboration. So we would also welcome technical and material support and exchange of knowledge and methodologies. In this
respect one additional actor to add to the 2nd column could be the academe/universities and research institutions. Further on this point, we also suggest one additional action, which is to collate case studies, experiences and approaches (including in multi-media and maps) and to make these available through the TK information portal as well as the IIFB indigenous portal (http://iifb.indigenousportal.com) that is managed by the IIFB Working Group on CEPA. This will assist in making the information more accessible by IPLCs and others interested in working on similar programmes or projects. This addition could also be included in columns 4 and 5 under this section. We see this mechanism as providing potentially immediate outcomes in the form of capacity building, indigenous to indigenous peer reviews, networking and enhancing efficiencies and collaborations.

Finally, we would like to share our views regarding task 3 on best practices on Customary Sustainable Use and Protected Areas:

On section i):
We are interested and willing to help with the development of guidelines on FPIC for protected areas if this is decided on, but we would like to consider the exploration and use of existing guidelines or materials for FPIC (non-PA specific). Perhaps a brief scoping research on such existing guidelines would be useful.

Such guidelines should also be made accessible through the TK information portal.

On section iii):
While we acknowledge the potential use and value of community protocols, we would also like to stress that development and use of protocols should remain a voluntary choice and approach by IPLCs, and should not be seen as a prerequisite for communities to get respect of their rights in relation to protected areas. Indigenous peoples must be free to determine whether they want to work with protocols or rather work with FPIC, the UNDRIP, enforcement of their customary laws and rules or their traditional institutions in other ways. We see this possible action as linked to the development of FPIC guidelines under section i). Therefore we suggest that columns 3 and 4 be brought in line with column 5, and add ‘and other mechanisms that affirm CSU and TK’ after ‘protocols’.

We understand that since establishing our suggested changes, that other parties have made contributions for consideration and we are open to contributing further on the Plan of Action so that together we can ensure customary sustainable use and to promote, support and strengthen IPLCs initiatives.

Thank you