

Climate Justice within the UNFCCC Negotiations: The Case of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples from Copenhagen Accord to Paris Agreement.

Abstract.

Indigenous peoples are a major constituent in the inter-play that involves management, protection, conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources globally. Several UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COPs) negotiation events have been held worldwide to agree on climate change actions aimed at reducing global emissions. Qualitative research using discourse and content analysis (DA and CA) was carried out to evaluate trends and patterns of COPs discussions from 2009 (COP 15) to 2015 (COP 21) in including the rights of indigenous peoples in their sessions using official documents generated and published on the UNFCCC official web portal. The sensitivities and rights of indigenous people were not taken into account up and until the Copenhagen Accord of 2009 (COP 15). COP 16 registered the highest WFC “Indigenous People” of 10, followed by COP 20 (7) and then COP 21 (5). COP 15 had the least WFC of 2. The rights of Indigenous People are more expressed in Financing and Capacity Building areas of the UNFCCC and least in Mitigation and Adaptation issues. The right to food and land has seldom been addressed in the 7 COPs while the right to health has been addressed only once during COP 21. Only participation and traditional knowledge have improved over time. There is a serious need to operationalize the Cancun Agreement of 2010 (COP 16) on the rights of indigenous peoples.

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