

# FREE, PRIOR, & INFORMED CONSENT

*"Free prior and informed consent (FPIC) is the principle that a community has the right to give or withhold its consent to proposed projects that may affect the lands they customarily own, occupy or otherwise use."*

—Forest Peoples Programme

- Communities, similar to individuals, have rights. One right of of community is free, prior, and informed consent.
- The right of consent recognizes the dignity and inherent worth of communities by guaranteeing self-determination and autonomy.
- The community right of consent is designed to protect the commonwealth and the common health of the community. The commons are the things we share: air, water, parks, wildlife, pollinators, culture, & public health.
- Free, prior, and informed consent is actually a responsibility of a community to safeguard nature and the future generations of all beings.
- Proposals such as mining, logging, & fracking affect the future of a community. Proposals that threaten the future, the commons, and the rights of self-determination and survival must be subjected to a process leading to either the grant of consent or denial of consent.
- Consent is the basis of governance. Without the consent of the governed there can only be dictatorship or chaos.
- Consent: Can be denied, can be given with conditions, can be given outright.
- Mechanisms for consent: Town hall meetings, ballot referendums or initiatives, any other method for direct democracy.

More Information:

<http://sehn.org/17-premises-of-free-prior-and-informed-consent-as-a-right-of-communities/>