

Agnieszka Szpak

Nicolaus Copernicus University (Poland)

Cooperation between European Cities and Amazonian Indigenous Peoples in the Fight Against Climate Change

'A sustainable future for all will only be possible if we reconcile social justice, the ecological boundaries of the earth and economic development. The overuse of natural resources globally is having a dramatic impact on the environment and leading to social problems. Only if the consumption of resources is reduced will we succeed in creating the conditions needed for effective climate protection and sustainable development. We need sustainable regional and local solutions that enable a good life for all the world's peoples – be it in the cities and towns of Europe or the indigenous territories of Amazonia' (Bridging Europe and Amazonia, 2017, p. 2)

Abstract: This paper concentrates on a particular example of cooperation between European cities and indigenous peoples of the Amazon river basin, namely that of Climate Alliance. The New Urban Agenda adopted at the UN Habitat III conference in October 2016 emphasizes that cities and other human settlements should meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities for current and future sustainable and economic inclusive development. Cities should also take measures to address climate change and protect and manage their ecosystems, water resources, the environment and biodiversity. Indigenous peoples, just like cities play a crucial role in the fight against climate change. 80 % of the territories with high biodiversity level are indigenous lands. Their indigenous ecological knowledge may serve as a valuable tool in initiatives aimed at fighting climate change. The aim of the paper is to show whether there are any benefits of such cooperation and what is its significance in the fight against climate change. The main research question is: what are the forms of cooperation between European cities and Amazonian indigenous peoples in the framework of Climate Alliance? In which way can European cities support indigenous peoples in their fight for their rights and consequently for the nature's preservation? The hypothesis is that European cities may learn from indigenous peoples of the Amazon how to combat climate change.

Keywords: *Climate Alliance, cities, indigenous peoples, climate change, multi-level governance*

Introduction

As this paper concentrates on Climate Alliance, which constitutes a particular example of cooperation between European cities and indigenous peoples of the Amazon river basin, it is necessary to point out to the general role of cities and indigenous peoples in combating climate change. This is, at the same time, the main goal of Climate Alliance.

The New Urban Agenda adopted at the UN Habitat III conference in October 2016 emphasizes that cities and other human settlements should meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities for current and future sustainable and economic inclusive development. Cities of the future should adopt and implement strategies for managing and reducing threats and building resilience to threats caused by nature and man. Cities should also take measures to address climate change and protect and manage their ecosystems, water resources, the environment and biodiversity (New Urban Agenda, 2016, paragraphs 13d, 13g, 13h). This Agenda sets out the principles and priorities for the development of cities (in other words, draws a vision of the cities of the future) for the next 20 years, when the next Habitat IV conference will take place. Also at the Conference of the States Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris in December 2015, the role of cities in combating climate change and reducing carbon emissions was highlighted (Paris Climate Agreement, 2015, Art. 7, 11 (2)). Both these documents also mention indigenous peoples and their role in combating climate change in Art. 20, 34, 38, 42, 48, 57, 125, 134, 148 and 155 of the New Urban Agenda and Art. 7 (5) of the Paris Climate Agreement all of these documents.

There are examples of municipalities cooperating, taking part in international relations or enforcing international law regarding these spheres, for example the Global Cities Covenant on Climate – the Mexico City Pact, adopted during the 2010 World Mayors Summit on Climate in Mexico by 207 city mayors (on line), or the organization C40 promoting programmes that propagate using bikes in cities and designating certain streets as pedestrian only as a way to combat climate changes (Barber, 2014, p. 22). To quote Janne Nijman, '[c]ities are part of the problem of climate change, but also part of the solution' (2011, p. 214). Though cities are responsible for ca. 75% of global emissions of CO₂, they have started – unilaterally or in cooperation with other cities – many programmes and actions intended as countermeasures against environmental pollution (Nijman, 2011, p. 214; Szpak, 2016, p. 60). As Ileana M. Porrás argued, '[i]n the absence of strong state leadership on climate change, cities have offered to step into the breach, and they have been welcomed with open arms by the international community' (2008, p. 592). Such a role of cities was recognized in the Agenda 21 adopted by the UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Chapter 28 of the Agenda 21 Local Authorities' Initiatives in Support of Agenda 21 (par. 28.1) provides that

[b]ecause so many of the problems and solutions being addressed by Agenda 21 have their roots in local activities, the participation and cooperation of local authorities

will be a determining factor in fulfilling its objectives. Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and subnational environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to the peoples, they play a vital role in educating, mobilizing and responding to the public to promote sustainable development.

Not only cities but also indigenous peoples play a crucial role in the fight against climate change. There are about 370 million indigenous peoples in the world which constitute about 5% of the world's population. They live in more than 70 countries and cover more than 24% of the Earth's surface. 80% of the territories with high biodiversity level are indigenous lands (Nakashima et al., 2012, p. 7; Adamson, 2007; *Delivering on Paris Promise*, 2017, p. 6). Simply, indigenous territories are places where biodiversity is best preserved (*Statement of Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz*, 2016; *Report to the UN General Assembly*, 2016, paragraph 15). Since time immemorial, indigenous peoples have successfully managed their water/marine and land species. Indigenous peoples have built rich cultural and social systems based on their spiritual and close relationship with nature. As a rule for ages they have developed mechanisms of using the natural resources in ways that guaranteed their sustainable use without undermining the needs of the future generations. Indigenous peoples have contributed to the preservation of nature with their traditional knowledge and indigenous practices which have been cultivated and developed for ages and transmitted from generation to generation (Woodman, 2015). Hence, indigenous peoples are often referred to as aboriginal stewards of the environment who take care of the ancestral lands for the future generations. This sometimes places on them unrealistic expectations but certainly their sustainable way of using the resources contributes to the preservation of the environment (Berkes, 2012, p. 19; *Guidelines for...*, 2014, p. 247).

Climate change and loss of biodiversity are among one of the greatest dangers to the survival of humankind, to populations of different countries and to indigenous peoples, as climate change poses a threat to the implementation of human rights, particularly of those vulnerable and marginalized groups like the indigenous peoples, rights such as land rights, rights to maintain their identity and traditional livelihood. Despite being the least to blame for destroying nature and causing the climate change, they are the first to feel the effects of those negative processes and experience their direct consequences in the most dramatic ways (Havemann, 2016, p. 49; *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report*, 2007, pp. 36–37; *Declaration of Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change*, 2002, p. 98).

After these short introductory remarks Section 2 will review the relevant literature and section 3 will develop the methodological approach adopted in this paper. Section 4 will concentrate on a particular example of cooperation between European municipalities and indigenous peoples of the Amazon river basin, namely that of Climate Alliance. Concluding

remarks will summarize all the considerations and attempt to answer the research questions posed in the section on methodology.

The subject matter of this paper lies at the intersection of urban studies and indigenous peoples' studies and all this is interwoven with the problem of climate change. Hence, it is of interdisciplinary character. With reference to the first strand of literature there is plenty of books on cities and climate change: M.E. Khan, *Green Cities. Urban Growth and the Environment*, Brookings Institution Press, 2006; H. Bulkeley, M.M. Betsill, *Cities and Climate Change. Urban Sustainability and Global Environmental Governance*, Routledge, 2003; A. Khare, T. Beckman (eds.), *Mitigating Climate Change. The Emerging Face of Modern Cities*, Springer, 2013. It also includes publications on the climate change and connected idea of sustainable cities, for example G. Haughton, C. Hunter, *Sustainable Cities*, Routledge, 2003 and J. Flint, M. Raco (eds.), *The Future of Sustainable Cities. Critical reflections*, Policy Press, 2012, also with reference to developing countries – C. Pugh (ed.), *Sustainable Cities in Developing Countries*, Earthscan, 2000. Some publications are situated at the intersection of climate change in cities and multi-level governance as S. Hughes, E.K. Chu, S.G. Mason (eds.), *Climate Change in Cities. Innovations in Multi-Level Governance*, Springer, 2018, S. Hughes, E.K. Chu, S.G. Mason (eds.), *Climate Change in Cities. Innovations in Multi-Level Governance*, Springer 2018; M.M. Betsil, H. Bulkeley, *Cities and the Multilevel Governance of Global Climate Change*, "Global Governance" No. 12 (2006), H. Bulkeley, M.M. Betsil, *Rethinking Sustainable Cities: Multilevel Governance and the "Urban" Politics of Climate Change*, "Environmental Politics", No. 14 (2005) and S. Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*, Cambridge University Press, 2005. This is fully justified as municipalities and local governments are regarded as one level in the multi-level governance, the level that is gaining more and more recognition and power.

There is also rich literature in the field of indigenous peoples and their role in the fight against climate change such as: D.J. Nakashima et al. (eds), *Weathering Uncertainty Traditional Knowledge for Climate Change Assessment and Adaptation*, UNESCO, 2012; F. Berkes, *Sacred Ecology*, London, Routledge, 2012; *Guidelines for Considering Traditional Knowledges in Climate Change Initiatives*, 2014; G. Raygorodetsky, *The Archipelago of Hope. Wisdom and Resilience from the Edge of Climate Change*, Pegasus Book, 2017; R. Pierotti, *Indigenous Knowledge, Ecology, And Evolutionary Biology*, Routledge, 2011 – all these publications point to the crucial role of indigenous knowledge (sometimes called traditional knowledge) in the preservation of nature and biodiversity and in the fight against climate change. Some publications refer to the legal remedies in the fight against climate change but still in close connection with indigenous knowledge which may be considered a source or a component in shaping such remedies. Here one can list J. Koppel Maldonado, B. Colombi and R. Pandya (eds), *Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples in the United States. Impacts, Experiences and Actions*, Springer, 2014 or R.S. Abate and E. A. Kronk Warner, *Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples: The Search for Legal Remedies*, Edward Elgar Publishing 2013.

Despite abundance of literature on climate change in connection with cities and climate change in connection with indigenous peoples, however considered separately as two problems, not much has been written on these issues combined meaning climate change and cooperation of cities with indigenous peoples in counteracting such a change. This paper is aimed at, at least partly, filling this lacuna. The idea of cities cooperating with indigenous peoples seems really interesting and worth exploring.

The aim of the paper is to show whether there are any benefits of such cooperation and what is its significance in the fight against climate change. Hence, the main research question is: what are the forms of cooperation between European cities and Amazonian indigenous peoples in the framework of the Climate Alliance? In which way can European cities support indigenous peoples in their fight for their rights and consequently for the nature's preservation? The hypothesis is that European cities may learn from indigenous peoples of the Amazon how to combat climate change.

The research method adopted is that of legal-institutional analysis as well as content analysis of relevant literature (analysis of the discourse). The first one includes an examination of the content of legal acts such as Paris Climate Agreement and other documents such as New Urban Agenda, statute of the Climate Alliance and numerous resolutions, declarations and reports adopted by the Climate Alliance. This method aims to organize and interpret the content of the documents adequate for the research aim. The documents and reports issued by the Climate Alliance are available at the organization's website which offers a multitude of helpful information. The analysis of these documents made it possible to reconstruct the purposes and activities of the Climate Alliance, forms of cooperation between European cities and indigenous peoples as well as define the mutual benefits of selected European municipalities and indigenous peoples of Amazonia in counteracting climate change. The second method – analysis of the relevant literature – predominates with reference to general considerations on the role of cities and indigenous peoples in the fight against climate change.

This article fits into the theoretical framework of institutional liberalism with its emphasis on the importance and role in international relations not only of States, but also non-State actors (among others, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, transnational corporations, cities, natural persons, indigenous peoples), rationalism characterizing the actions of States, which apart from their particular interests, also see the common interest underlying their cooperation, the hierarchy of problems in international relations with the most important issue being not security, but the well-being of citizens, which translates into attaching more importance to social, economic and ecological problems than military ones. This approach opens up to non-State participants of international relations, and stresses the interdependence of State interests, the plurality of international actors, the democratization of international life and the increase in international interdependence (Zięba, 2010, p. 355).

An Analysis of the Climate Alliance Framework and Forms of Cooperation

Origin and Premises of Cooperation

Climate Alliance is a non-governmental organization (association) registered in Germany in 1990 with its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main (*Statute*, Art. 1). It includes about 1 700 member municipalities from 26 European countries, mostly from Germany, Austria and Italy (*List of members*, on-line). Indigenous peoples are represented by COICA (*Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica*), an umbrella organization for indigenous peoples of the Amazon. The idea of cooperation between European cities and indigenous peoples of the Amazonia, of two such different partners, at first sight seems quite surprising, but after a deeper examination it is, indeed, an interesting one.

According to the Statute of Climate Alliance the aim of the organization is ‘to promote environmental protection’ (Art. 2). Climate change is recognized as a global challenge that – apart from global actions – requires most of all local solutions: ‘[t]he idea is simple and not at all new: each of us must act locally if we want to succeed globally. There is hardly a better way to drive local action than at the community level – be it in the cities of Europe or the forests of the Amazon Basin. In acting, however, we must understand that the effects that our choices have on the world’s most vulnerable people and places’ (*Taking stock and looking forward...*, 2018, p. 3).

In the Manifesto of European Cities and an Alliance with the Amazonian Indian Peoples (1990), which was the founding document of the Climate Alliance, the founding members declared, and it is worth quoting this passage in full:

We support the alliance of the Amazonian Indian Peoples. We, the cities of Europe, support the concern of the Amazonian Indian Peoples for the preservation of the tropical rain forest, the basis of their very existence, through the demarcation and sustainable use of the Amazonian territories. Their defence of the forests and rivers is a contribution to sustaining the Earth’s atmosphere for future generations as the basic precondition for human existence. Wood from tropical rainforests must therefore be neither imported nor utilized in any way; moreover, further forms of forest degradation such as unlimited cattle production, colonization projects, the use of pesticides, monocultures, hydroelectric power stations and mining and mineral oil exploitations which are environmentally damaging must be questioned. The forests are a sink for carbon dioxide, the emission of which we, too, – in our own way – seek to restrict (point 3).

This seems to be the statement embracing the fundamental goals and principles of the cooperation between European cities and indigenous peoples. These declarations were

supplemented by the Bolzano Declaration adopted by the General Assembly of Climate Alliance in May 2000. In order to achieve the declared goal of Climate Alliance the following measures will be implemented:

- continual reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The target is the reduction of CO₂ emissions by ten percent every five years. The important milestone of halving per capita emissions (reference year 1990) should be achieved by 2030 at the latest;
- extensive reduction of the emissions in municipalities of all gases that contribute to global warming;
- avoidance of the use of tropical timber in municipal activities;
- exchange of information among the municipalities and commissioning of joint reports on the above issues;
- assistance to indigenous peoples by promoting projects;
- support for the interests of the Amazonian Indian peoples in preserving the tropical rainforests, these being the very basis of their existence, by granting them title of ownership and ensuring the sustainable use of their territories;
- informing the public about the stated objectives, and targeted promotion of energy saving measures in the private sector (Art. 2).

Most of these measures refer directly to actions and initiatives that have to be implemented in the European municipalities. Two of these measures are expressly devoted to indigenous peoples. There is a clear nexus between these measures and a purpose of Climate Alliance which nexus boils down to motivation or reasons for convening such a body or framework for cooperation. In this context as Paul Havemann (2016, p. 49) rightly claims,

sound environmental stewardship is not something that needs to be learned from scratch' as the indigenous peoples all over the world gathered and developed indigenous knowledge for generations. Those practices have for too long been neglected, destroyed and are still under threat today, yet they may teach us how to restore the ecological balance. Recognition of indigenous traditional knowledge and its holders as well as their right to self-determination may contribute to establishing and implementing 'a new bio-cultural paradigm [...] to guide others on how to live within the Earth's ecological limits (Havemann, 2016, p. 50).

Consequently, in order to use indigenous knowledge and learn lessons from it, it is necessary first to recognize indigenous knowledge, indigenous languages that are transmitter of such knowledge, indigenous cultures as well as land rights and the right to self-determination of the indigenous peoples. All of those rights combined must be recognized and respected. Only in this way indigenous knowledge and practices may develop and be preserved as

well as shared by indigenous peoples with the rest of the world with the aim to mitigate the climate change and contribute to the preservation of nature and biodiversity. Hence, European municipalities, members of Climate Alliance, support indigenous peoples of the Amazonia in preserving their lands and tropical forests because this is the only way to preserve their survival, identity and their invaluable indigenous ecological knowledge. European cities cooperating with indigenous peoples also have an invaluable opportunity to learn from indigenous peoples and use their experience and indigenous knowledge in the fight against climate change. Building on the experience of indigenous peoples they can help European municipalities 'to develop concepts that promote a good life for all the world's peoples' (*Bridging Europe and Amazonia*, 2017, p. 2).

Forms of Cooperation

In line with what has been stated above cooperation between European municipalities and indigenous peoples involves 'initiatives for renewable energies, energy efficiency or energy conservation' and 'safeguarding their forests and territorial rights' respectively (*A holistic approach*, on-line). Climate Alliance thus combines an emphasis on ambitious initiatives in European municipalities with support for stewardship of the indigenous lands and tropical forests in the Amazonia (*A holistic approach*, on-line). Such cooperation may be realized through institutional support, reinforcement of indigenous participation in international and domestic decision-making processes and direct support via projects implemented in the Amazon region (*Bridges to Amazonia*, on-line). For example National Coordination Offices of Climate Alliance are responsible for regional and local projects of their indigenous partners. One of such indigenous partners is, already mentioned, COICA founded in the Lima (Peru) in 1984 and which is an umbrella organization of the indigenous organizations of the Amazon Basin. Its purpose is to advocate the rights of indigenous peoples (COICA, on-line). Another umbrella organization FOIRN (Federation of the Indigenous Peoples of Rio Negro) consists of organizations of indigenous peoples of the Rio Negro region in Brazil. Together with the members of Climate Alliance from Austria and Luxemburg they managed to create one of the largest continuous areas of protected rainforest globally. Another aspect of this successful outcome was increased recognition for indigenous lands and rights to education and health. After visiting Brazil the Austrian municipal representatives were able to directly see and understand the way of live of indigenous peoples whose survival hinges on forest agriculture and fishing. They could also get a first-hand comprehension of the threats that flow to indigenous livelihoods, mostly from the Western lifestyles (*Taking stock and...*, 2018, p. 14; *Bridging Europe and Amazonia*, 2018, p. 10; *Championing Climate Justice*, 2017, p. 20).

In other strand of cooperation Asháninka people regularly cooperate with the municipality of Munich in Germany. This cooperation includes regular visits in Munich with the aim of education and raising awareness. They draw attention to the results of climate change and exploitation of their natural resources and in return Munich contributes to Asháninka

sustainability projects supporting their land rights and their culture (*Bridging Europe and Amazonia*, 2017, p. 9). Another German municipality, Rostock help Harakmbut people of Peru to protect their natural resources and more generally undertakes actions and initiatives for sustainable urban development (*Taking stock and...*, 2018, p. 14; *Championing Climate Justice*, 2017, p. 44).

Another form of support of indigenous peoples is a legal assistance fund which finances attorneys and legal fees that indigenous peoples have to bear. Due to such support several representatives of indigenous peoples were able to successfully exercise their rights to defence in court when sued by mining corporations (*Defending indigenous rights*, on-line). In 2018 in the Barcelona Declaration members of Climate Alliance called for 'the construction of an Amazon Indigenous Fund to help finance various indigenous climate strategies' (*Taking stock...*, 2018, p. 3).

Cooperation of European municipalities and indigenous peoples within the framework of Climate Alliance empowers both of them, makes their voices heard not only nationally but also internationally. Through organising conferences, side events, undertaking various initiatives and projects Climate Alliance emphasizes the importance of the local level actions (in cities and on indigenous lands respectively). Importantly Climate Alliance calls for the nation-States to ratify the International Labour Organization Convention no. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (*Bolzano Declaration*, 2000; *Barcelona Declaration*, 2018; *ILO Convention 169*, on-line). European municipalities support indigenous rights, in particular land rights. As the Mayor of Cologne, Andreas Wolter stated: '[a] climate partnership between an indigenous community and the city of Cologne supports the indigenous organizations in their struggle for recognition, against discrimination, land grabbing and deforestation' (*Championing Climate Justice*, 2017, p. 42). Land rights are of special importance as, on one hand, they are essential to the survival of indigenous peoples and, on the other, they can be regarded as a measure of biodiversity protection and a tool to counteract climate change.

With reference to indigenous lands it must be stressed that indigenous communities have the right to be consulted before any major infrastructure or development projects are conducted on their lands (Art. 28 of the UN Declaration). Brendan Tobin (2014, p. 48) points out that free, prior and informed consent is generally considered mandatory in projects in the fields such as mining industries, logging, palm oil, protected areas, climate change mitigation, energy and building programs and access to genetic resources. This is also connected with the obligation resulting from art. 7 (3) ILO Convention No. 169 on environmental impact assessments, according to which States parties ensure that research is conducted in cooperation with the peoples concerned in order to assess the social, spiritual, cultural and environmental impact of planned development activities on these communities. The results of these tests are considered as the basic criterion for the implementation of the projects. Conducting such research is a safeguard to ensure that restrictions imposed on indigenous or tribal peoples in relation to their land rights, when concessions are granted on their territory, do not entail

a refusal to survive as a people (*Kichwa Indigenous People of Sarayaku v. Ecuador*, 2012, paragraphs 204–205). Despite this, indigenous peoples are often not aware of their rights to free, prior and informed consent. In this context it is worth indicating that in 2017, indigenous communities from both Bolivia and Peru requested financial support from Climate Alliance to undertake initiatives aimed at informing their communities of their rights. Due to such help ‘inhabitants of 54 indigenous territories and 22 protected areas [were] informed in the face of national infrastructure plans in Bolivia [and] 20 dialogues [were] held in 12 indigenous communities in response to State plans to establish a national park in the Alto Purus region of Peru’ (Climate Alliance, 2017/2018, p. 86).

Among the campaigns and projects realized by Climate Alliance that combine climate change, cities and indigenous peoples one may enumerate ‘Movie on megaprojects in Brazil’ aimed at documenting megaprojects in Brazil like the building of the Belo Monte dam that would result in flooding indigenous lands with rainforests¹ and Grupo Sal encompassing a glimpse of indigenous realities through art (*Campaigns and more*, on-line). During the EU-funded project ‘The Future We Want – Local Authorities for Sustainable Development’ representatives of indigenous peoples travelled to seven European countries and talked to politicians, citizens and representatives of locals organizations and municipal governments. This project enabled the indigenous delegates to act as ‘ambassadors for sustainability’ (which includes protection of rainforests) (*Championing Climate Justice*, 2017, p. 2). These visits made both sides to realize that apart from a lot of differences between European municipalities and indigenous peoples of the Amazon region, there were also many similarities between the two and among others these similarities lie at the roots of solidarity between members of Climate Alliance. One of them is the common feeling of responsibility for the Earth and global climate, the other one common challenges at the local level. As stated in the Climate Alliance publication ‘Championing Climate Justice’, ‘[i]t emerged that, in many respects, indigenous communities work just like municipalities: both are responsible for planning their areas and are confronted with challenges such as the rural exodus and provision of public services. As the local level, they are also best in a position to implement practical climate protection activities in their territories’ (*Championing Climate Justice*, 2017, p. 43).

Generally, cooperation in the framework of Climate Alliance raises awareness in respect of the relationship between everyday lives, consumption and behavioral patterns of the citizens of European cities and the lives and livelihoods of indigenous peoples in the Amazon basin. It provides information and promotes knowledge on climate change as well as helps to generate public and stakeholder support in the field of preventing and mitigating climate change as well as climate protection. As the international community is searching for

¹ “Campaigns and more”, <http://www.climatealliance.org/activities/campaigns-and-more.html?p-age=990>. For more details see: Count Down on River Xingu V, <http://overdeveloped.eu/en/background/belo-monte-movie.htm>.

solutions to global challenges or threats such as climate change and the overexploitation of natural resources, and as the majority of the solutions coming from Western-dominated and at the same time supposedly scientific perspective are not sufficient, the world should to a higher extent implement alternative solutions and concepts, some of them from indigenous peoples. The aim of the activities of Climate Alliance, especially visits of the indigenous delegates in European partners, was to consider the possibility of incorporating elements of these concepts into everyday reality (*Championing Climate Justice*, 2017, p. 30). Zoltan Hajdu from Focus Eco Center (Romania) rightly believes that

the partnership between European municipalities and indigenous communities is very important because the Europeans can only truly understand the situation of the indigenous peoples through direct contact. [...] This experience helps to change our vision of development and consumption patterns. We are living on the same single earth, and only through cooperation and mutual support can we implement such ambitious large scale projects like the [Sustainable Development Goals] (*Championing Climate Justice*, 2017, p. 47).

Concluding remarks

Climate Alliance is based on two pillars – local climate action in European municipalities resulting in reductions in CO₂ (by 10 per cent every 5 years) and cooperation with indigenous peoples of the Amazon basin (through supporting their initiatives, awareness-raising and abstaining from unsustainable use of tropical timber). It is indeed an interesting and unique initiative. Cooperation between European cities and Amazonian indigenous peoples fits into the concepts of sustainable development and common but differentiated responsibilities. The concept of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’ was included as Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992) which stated:

[i]n view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.

Taking into account all the above considerations, there is a visible interconnectedness between European municipalities and places far away. Cities and indigenous peoples have a common goal and face common challenge of climate change but still their responsibilities differ. As mentioned, indigenous peoples are the least to blame for causing or contributing to climate change. Their practices more than any others fit into the concept of sustainable development.

Cooperation within Climate Alliance may also be regarded as a part of multi-level governance, cooperation between sub-State (or even non-State) actors – cities and non-State actors – indigenous peoples. As rightly stressed by Patricia Kandler from Climate Alliance Austria, '[t]here are many problems, some of which are similar to ours, but there is also a great deal of cohesion in the village communities. We can learn from that...the Climate Alliance partnership should serve as a model for good cooperation worldwide' (*Taking stock...*, 2018, p. 15). Cities have a role to play in the area of problem-solving, even global problem-solving, especially when they form powerful city networks, multiplying in this way their potentials and strengths. In Climate Alliance they in a way strengthen and legitimize their actions by cooperating with indigenous peoples and learning from their experience. Actually, Climate Alliance is a unique city network that groups not only cities but also indigenous partners. As Michele Acuto concludes his book, 'governance assemblages [such as for example cities and their networks] do not unfold in a vacuum, but rather in a complex spatiality where they are forced to intersect or bypass other structures, which in turn affect their nature' (2013, p. 169). What is important and connected with the previous quote, cities act 'at scales and through activities outside the reach of national institutions' (Davis, de Duren, 2011, p. 1). Climate Alliance illustrates that European cities directly interact with indigenous peoples in a distant place of the world. As part of the global governance cities take part in managing global problems, especially climate change and sustainable development (Goldin, 2013, p. 3). Cooperation in the framework of Climate Alliance once again confirms that global challenges like climate change require local solutions.

The purpose of the paper was to show whether there are any benefits of cooperation between European municipalities and indigenous peoples and what is its significance in the fight against climate change. Such cooperation brings mutual benefits for European cities and indigenous peoples, among others access to advice on the local climate change policies as well as opportunity of taking advantage of instruments to support climate action strategies. Mutual exchange of ideas, opinions and experience definitely acts as inspiration (also cities may inspire each other). During all the conferences and seminars there are opportunities for exchange of ideas and mutual learning. Indigenous peoples obtain financial support for their projects and initiatives as well as for raising awareness of their rights. Due to such cooperation the voices of indigenous peoples as well as European cities with respect to climate change actions are heard (*Member benefits*, on-line).

Cooperation within Climate Alliance contributed to recognition of indigenous lands and rights, like in the case of protected areas in the Rio Negro region in Brazil. Due to financial support from European cities representatives of indigenous peoples were able to defend themselves in court proceedings. Such support also enabled implementation of the obligation of nation States to consult indigenous peoples in case of infrastructure projects carried out on indigenous lands (like in Bolivia and Peru). Finally an important benefit is raising awareness in European cities of the indigenous livelihoods and their invaluable

ecological knowledge – that with their free prior and informed consent – may be used in the fight against climate change.

Cooperation between European cities and Amazonian indigenous peoples is a tool in the fight against climate change. It serves both sides as they mutually reinforce each other and complement their efforts. Climate Alliance is a unique city network that groups European municipalities and indigenous peoples where cooperation gives the partners mutual benefits and legitimizes cities in their fight against climate change. European municipal efforts aimed at preventing climate change help to preserve the ‘lungs of the world’ as Amazonia is often called.

As with reference to the main research questions and the hypothesis, the main forms of cooperation between European cities and Amazonian indigenous peoples include common climate projects, visits or conferences and seminars aimed at exchange of ideas and experience, financial support for indigenous communities in fight for their rights and their recognition which clearly impacts climate. It impacts climate as indigenous territories constitute 80 % of the highest biodiversity level territories. Indigenous peoples have successfully and for ages cared for nature and their ecological knowledge and practices may be useful in the global actions against climate change. European cities support indigenous peoples in the fight for their rights in many ways. They support them financially, they visit indigenous communities in order to get firsthand experience and then educate Europeans in this regard. They also contribute to recognition of indigenous lands. Overall, all these activities contribute to raising awareness of climate change and indigenous peoples’ livelihoods and significance and wisdom of their indigenous knowledge. Hence, European cities may definitely benefit from this knowledge and learn from indigenous peoples of the Amazon how to combat climate change.

References

- Acuto, M. (2013). *Global Cities, Governance, and Diplomacy. The Urban Link*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Adamson, R.L. (2019, February 24). *Indigenous Stewardship Preserves Biodiversity at Less Cost*. First Peoples. Retrieved from: <http://www.firstpeoples.org/news/EGAJournalSpring2007.pdf>.
- Berkes, F. (2012). *Sacred Ecology*, London: Routledge.
- Betsil, M.M., Bulkeley, H. (2006). *Cities and the Multilevel Governance of Global Climate Change*. *Global Governance*, No. 12, pp. 141–159.
- Bulkeley, H., Betsil, M.M. (2005). *Rethinking Sustainable Cities: Multilevel Governance and the “Urban” Politics of Climate Change*. *Environmental Politics*, No. 14, pp. 42–63.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *A holistic approach*. Retrieved from: <http://www.climatealliance.org/about-us.html?page=54>.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Barcelona Declaration*. Retrieved from: https://www.climatealliance.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/4_Activities/EU_policy_papers/Barcelona_Declaration_Final.pdf.

- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Bolzano Declaration*. Retrieved from: https://www.climatealliance.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/1_About_us/Association_docs/Bolzano_Declaration_EN_2000.pdf.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Bridges to Amazonia*. Retrieved from: <http://www.climatealliance.org/indigenous-partners.html?page=990>.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Bridging Europe and Amazonia*. Retrieved from: https://www.climatealliance.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/7_Downloads/TFWW_EN_web.pdf.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Campaigns and more*. Retrieved from: <http://www.climatealliance.org/activities/campaigns-and-more.html?page=990>.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Championing Climate Justice*. Retrieved from: https://www.climatealliance.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/7_Downloads/Championing_Climate_Justice.pdf.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Climate Alliance. Review and Outlook 2017/2018*. Retrieved from: https://www.climatealliance.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/7_Downloads/Climate_Alliance_Annual_Report_and_Outlook_2017_2018.pdf.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *COICA*. Retrieved from: <http://www.climatealliance.org/indigenous-partners/coica.html?page=382>.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Defending indigenous rights*. Retrieved from: <http://www.climatealliance.org/indigenous-partners/indigenous-rights.html?page=888>.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *List of members*. Retrieved from: <http://www.climatealliance.org/nc/municipalities/the-network.html?page=54>.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Manifesto of European Cities and an Alliance with the Amazonian Indian Peoples*. Retrieved from: https://www.climatealliance.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/1_About_us/Association_docs/Bolzano_Declaration_EN_2000.pdf.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Statute of the Climate Alliance*. Retrieved from: https://www.climatealliance.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/1_About_us/Association_docs/Statutes_EN.pdf.
- Climate Alliance. (2019, February 24). *Taking stock and looking forward Local authorities in action. Climate Alliance's Contribution to the Talanoa Dialogue*. Retrieved from: https://www.climatealliance.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/4_Activities/EU_policy_papers/Climate_Alliance_Talanoa_Report_-_final.pdf.
- Davis, D.E., de Duren, N.L. (Eds.). (2011). *Cities and Sovereignty. Identity Politics in Urban Spaces*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Declaration of Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change. Second International Indigenous Forum on Climate Change, The Hague, 15 November 2000*. (2002). Australian Indigenous Law Reports, vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 97–101.
- Delivering on Paris. (2019, February 24). *Delivering on Paris Promise. Combating Climate Change While Protecting Rights*. Retrieved from: <https://www.deliveringonparis.com/>.
- Goldin, I. (2013). *Divided Nations: Why Global Governance Is Failing, and What We Can Do About It*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Habitat III. (2019, February 24). *New Urban Agenda 2016*. Retrieved from: <http://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>.
- Havemann, P. (2019, February 24). *Lessons from indigenous knowledge and culture: learning to live in harmony with nature in an age of ecocide*. In *State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2016. Minority Rights Group International*. Retrieved from: <http://minorityrights.org/publications/state-of-the-worlds-minorities-and-indigenous-peoples-2016/>.
- High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2019, February 24). *Statement of Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, at the 71st session of the General Assembly*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20748&L>

- angID=E. Hughes, S., Chu, E.K., Mason, S.G. (Eds.). (2018). *Climate Change in Cities. Innovations in Multi-Level Governance*. Cham: Springer.
- ICLEI. (2019, February 24). *World Mayors Summit on Climate – Mayors push for hope after Copenhagen*. Retrieved from: <http://www.iclei.org/climate-roadmap/advocacy/global-lg-events/2010-world-mayors-summit-on-climate-mexico-city.html>.
- Inter-American Court of Human Rights. (2019, February 23). *Kichwa Indigenous People of Sarayaku v. Ecuador. Judgment of June 27, 2012 (Merits and Reparations)*. Retrieved from: http://corteidh.or.cr/docs/casos/articulos/seriec_245_ing.pdf.
- International Labour Organization. (2019, February 24). *International Labour Organization Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (1989)*. Retrieved from: http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169.
- Nakashima, D.J. et al. (Eds.). (2012). *Weathering Uncertainty Traditional Knowledge for Climate Change Assessment and Adaptation*. Paris: UNESCO. Overdeveloped. (2019, February 24). *Count Down on River Xingu V*. Retrieved from: <http://overdeveloped.eu/en/background/belo-monte-movie.html>.
- Szpak, A. (2016). *The Growing Role of Cities and Their Networks in the International Relations and International Security*. Athenaeum. Polskie Studia Politologiczne, No. 52, pp. 54–77.
- Tarrow, S. (2005). *The New Transnational Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2019, February 24). *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar4/syr/>.
- The Climate and Traditional Knowledges Workgroup. (2019, February 24). *Guidelines for Considering Traditional Knowledges in Climate Change Initiatives*. Retrieved from: <https://climatetkw.wordpress.com/>.
- Tobin, B. (2014). *Indigenous Peoples, Customary Law and Human Rights – Why Living Law Matters*. Routledge: New York.
- UNESCO. (2019, February 24). *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development 1992*. Retrieved from: http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/RIO_E.PDF. United Nations. (2019, February 24). *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007*. Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf.
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2019, February 24). *Paris Climate Agreement 2015*. Retrieved from: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf.
- UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. (2019, February 24). *Report to the UN General Assembly on Conservation and indigenous peoples' rights, July 29, 2016*. Retrieved from: <http://unsr.vtaulicorpuz.org/site/index.php/documents/annual-reports/149-report-ga-2016>.
- Woodman, J. (2019, February 24). *Conservation and the rights of tribal people must go hand in hand*. The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/apr/23/conservation-and-the-rights-of-tribal-people-must-go-hand-in-hand>.
- Zięba, R. (2010). *Nowe wyzwania i zagrożenia dla bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego: aspekty metodologiczne*. In *Świat wobec współczesnych wyzwań i zagrożeń*. J. Symonides (Ed.). Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, pp. 335–361.

Author

prof. Agnieszka Szpak

dianora@friend.pl - Faculty of Political Science and International Studies, Nicolaus Copernicus University