

Building Indigenous Knowledge into Climate Change Assessment and Adaptation

A side-event at the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

13:15 – 14:45, 22 September 2014

Venue: UNDP, 304 45th street, 15th floor, room 1507A

Registered participants are asked to wait on the corner of 45th Street and 2nd Avenue at 12:45 and a UNESCO staff will escort them to the meeting room.

Lunch will be served.

“ *There is growing recognition that traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use underpin indigenous peoples’ and local communities’ resilience in the face of change including climate change, as well as contribute directly to nurturing biological and cultural diversity, and global sustainable development ...*

Biodiversity loss and climate change are pressing environmental challenges that nations face collectively. While there have been global gains in the recognition of traditional knowledge, more investment is needed in enabling its effective contributions to sustainable development policy and science, including the effective participation of traditional knowledge holders – indigenous peoples and local communities. ”

[UN Interagency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples. Thematic Paper on Traditional Knowledge prepared for the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples]

In conjunction with the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) and the UN Secretary General’s Summit on Climate Change, UNESCO, in partnership with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations University Traditional Knowledge Initiative, is organizing organizing a side event to stimulate discussion and analysis of the current status of indigenous knowledge within intergovernmental processes and to identify what needs to be done to move from recognition to action.

Access to the 'best available knowledge' is often cited as an essential requirement for environmental decision-making. Until recently, however, assessments have remained entirely science-based, and have ignored or at best misinterpreted, other knowledge sources such as indigenous knowledge, despite their central role in community-based resource management and local resilience. While great strides have been made in the last decade towards recognizing the need to include local and indigenous knowledge, major questions remain about how science and indigenous knowledge can be brought together in assessment processes in an effective and appropriate manner.

At this UNESCO side-event, indigenous peoples and scientists will review the current status of indigenous knowledge in global environmental assessment processes, and identify strategic next steps to ensure that diverse sources of knowledge can come together in an effective and culturally appropriate manner to better inform environmental understanding and decision-making.

Side-event co-chairs

- ◆ **John Scott**, Programme Officer for Traditional Knowledge, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
- ◆ **Youba Sokona**, Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group on Mitigation

Opening remarks from Flavia Schlegel, incoming Assistant Director-General for the Natural Sciences, UNESCO

Keynote address by Premier of Greenland, Ms Aleqa Hammond

Panellists

- ◆ **Patricia Cochran**, Inupiat and Executive Director of the Alaska Native Science Commission
- ◆ **Myrna Cunningham**, Miskito / Nicaragua and Executive Director of CADPI (El Centro para la Autonomia y Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indigenas)
- ◆ **Margaret Hiza Redsteer**, Research geologist, US Geological Survey
- ◆ **Petra Tschakert**, Associate Professor at Penn State University

For more information on speakers, agenda and logistics, please go to www.climatefrontlines.org