

CO-CONVENORS' RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARIES

Indigenous Knowledge

- Douglas Nakashima, Chief, Section for Small Islands and Indigenous Knowledge, UNESCO
- Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, Brazilian Academy of Sciences and the Third World Academy of Science
- Myrna Cunningham, Member, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and Executive Director, Centro para la Autonomía y Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (CADPI), Nicaragua
- Roberto Marin, Asociación de Capitanes y Autoridades Tradicionales Indígenas del Pira Parana (ACAIP), Columbia
- Jaqueline Evangelista Dias, Articulação Pacari, Brazil (TBC)
- Jennifer Rubis, Climate Frontlines coordinator, UNESCO
- Joji Carino, TEBTEBBA (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education), Philippines

Main Points

Since the 1992 Earth Summit, indigenous and traditional knowledge has gained increasing recognition as an essential building block for global sustainability in numerous domains including biodiversity conservation & management, food security, natural disaster preparedness, environmental & social impact assessment, climate change assessment & adaptation, amongst others.

This expanding recognition is leading to a transformation of the relationship between scientists, policy-makers and indigenous knowledge-holders, and also changing basic notions and attitudes, not only about indigenous knowledge, but also about science. The session pointed to the following **emerging paradigm shifts**:

- On the relationship between scientific and indigenous knowledge systems, a shift **away** from the notion of scientific validation of extraneous knowledge and its integration into science, **towards** an approach anchored in the co-design of research and the co-production of new knowledge to address complex emerging challenges. The concepts of 'co-design' and 'co-production' imply an equitable interaction amongst knowledge systems and, while challenging, may create new opportunities for innovative thinking and creative solutions.
- On valuing diverse knowledge systems, which argues for a shift **away** from centralized and standardized approaches to sustainable development, and **towards** a devolution of research agendas and decision-making processes to the local level, as well as polycentric governance

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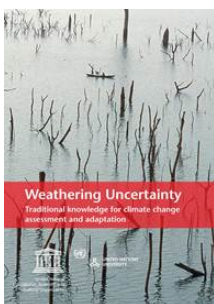
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systems, that benefit from the added value of place-based knowledge systems of heightened local relevance.

Acknowledging the above emerging paradigm shifts along the science-indigenous knowledge interface, the session brought forward the following recommendations:

1. Beyond acknowledging the value of indigenous knowledge, the scientific community and policy-makers should recognize and actively engage with indigenous knowledge holders as actors in their own right.
2. Science should move beyond an approach of validating and integrating indigenous knowledge, towards embracing **knowledge co-design and co-production** that bring scientists and indigenous knowledge holders together on an equitable and mutually-respectful basis.
3. Action to sustain the dynamism and creative force of indigenous knowledge must begin within indigenous communities and be based upon fostering sound and culturally-appropriate modes of knowledge transmission. Of particular importance is the **re-design and re-orientation of formal and non-formal education** to recognize indigenous languages, epistemologies and pedagogies.
4. Recognition of the diversity of knowledge systems, whether scientific or indigenous, each with their distinct histories, ontologies, epistemologies, modes of transmission and communication, value systems and worldviews, is critical for a productive engagement amongst knowledge holders that may generate innovative solutions to complex sustainable development problems.
5. These processes must be based upon the full and effective participation of indigenous knowledge holders, and the respect for the rights of their societies and cultures as outlined within the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



Weathering Uncertainty provides an overview of scientific literature on the contribution of indigenous knowledge to understanding climate change impacts and adaptation. It broadens awareness of climate scientists and decision-makers, including Authors and Reviewers for IPCC's forthcoming Fifth Assessment Report.

Launch of the UNESCO-UNU book "Weathering Uncertainty: Traditional knowledge for climate change assessment and adaptation".

cf. SciDev coverage

http://scidevnet.wordpress.com/2012/06/14/weathering-uncertainty-learn-from-indigenous-communities/?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=twitterfeed

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