

**WORLD BANK INPUTS TO THE 17TH SESSION OF THE UN PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES
DURING APRIL 16-27, 2018 IN NEW YORK**

BACKGROUND ON THE WORLD BANK AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Indigenous Peoples are culturally distinct societies and communities. The land on which they live and the natural resources on which they depend are inextricably linked to their identities, cultures, livelihoods, as well as their physical and spiritual well-being.

There are approximately 370 million Indigenous Peoples worldwide, in over 90 countries. Although they make up 5 percent of the global population, they account for about 15 percent of the extreme poor.

While Indigenous Peoples own, occupy or use a quarter of the world's surface area, they safeguard 80 percent of the world's remaining biodiversity. They hold vital ancestral knowledge and expertise on how to adapt, mitigate, and reduce risks from climate change and natural disasters. However, only a fraction of these lands are officially recognized by states, whether they are lands Indigenous Peoples traditionally owned or possessed under customary title.

Access to tenure, capacity building, good resource governance, among other interventions will aid in improving their situation. The World Bank works with Indigenous Peoples to enhance their sustainable economic growth and livelihoods, culturally appropriate conservation and development, as well as strategies to address multiple sources of disadvantage, taking into account their views and development needs.

Over the last 20 years Indigenous Peoples' rights have been increasingly recognized through the adoption of international instruments and mechanisms, such as the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UNDRIP) in 2007, the establishment of the [United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#) (UNPFII), the [Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (EMRIP), and the [UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UNSR).

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL FRAMEWORK

In an effort to address new development demands and challenges, from 2012 to 2016, the Bank undertook an extensive review process to update and consolidate the Bank's environmental and social safeguard policies. Indigenous Peoples were an integral part of the dialogue around this review.

The three consultation phases of the safeguards review included a number of dedicated Indigenous Peoples Dialogue sessions, yielding a high level of participation, information gathered, and a renewed and stronger relationship between the World Bank and Indigenous Peoples. A key dialogue took place in April 2015 with thirty IP leaders, the World Bank President and senior management that resulted in a Global Action Plan for Indigenous Peoples and a renewed and stronger relationship between the World Bank and Indigenous Peoples.

On August 4, 2016, the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved a new [Environmental and Social Framework \(ESF\)](#) that expands protections for people and the environment in Bank-financed investment projects.

The ESF includes an Environmental and Social Standard ([ESS 7 for Indigenous Peoples](#))/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities, which introduces the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and includes pastoralists and peoples in voluntary isolation.

ESS7 contributes to poverty reduction and sustainable development by ensuring that projects supported by the Bank enhance opportunities for Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities to participate in, and benefit from, the development process in ways that do not threaten their unique cultural identities and well-being.

The World Bank is now implementing an intensive preparation and training period for the transition to this new framework. Indigenous Peoples will continue to be a crucial partner in the roll-out and implementation of the ESF.

The main instrument to ensure the application of concepts included in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in World Bank operations is the ESF. It ensures that the development process fosters full respect for the human rights, dignity, aspirations, identity, culture, and natural resource-based livelihoods of IPs and seeks to avoid adverse impacts of projects on these communities.

ACTIONS OF THE WORLD BANK TO SUPPORT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UN PERMANENT FORUM ON ITS 16th SESSION, THE UN DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, AND THE SYSTEM WIDE ACTION PLAN ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

1. Dialogue and Capacity Building with Indigenous Peoples

The World Bank is strengthening engagement with Indigenous Peoples through dialogue and capacity building at the regional and country levels. Two examples of this work are:

- In **Central Africa**, the Bank is working with REPALEAC, the sub-regional network of Indigenous Peoples, to define their needs and targets through the creation of a Strategic Framework in the areas of land governance, natural resource management, sustainable livelihoods, cultural and climate resilience, and the realization of rights and to strengthen capacities of REPALEAC members to implement their Strategic Framework.
- In **Latin America**, a Dialogue with the Latin American Regional IP network, Foro Indigena de Abya Yala (FIAY), has increased the institutional strength of the organization, influenced World Bank safeguard policies, and created space for the conception and implementation of joint projects with the World Bank and FIAY.

2. Empowerment of Indigenous Peoples in Development

The World Bank is helping to empower Indigenous Peoples to assume direct management of projects that affect them or projects in which they are involved. Examples include:

- The Forest Investment Program's [Dedicated Grant Mechanism](#) (DGM) is an innovative grant program for fighting forest loss is putting project design and funding decisions in the hands of indigenous peoples and local communities, giving them the power to set priorities and implement programs aimed at conserving their natural environment.
- The [Forest Carbon Partnership Facility Capacity Building Program](#) (CBP) in Asia, Africa and Latin America, works to provide forest-dependent indigenous peoples with information, knowledge and awareness to enhance their understanding of REDD+ and their ability to engage more meaningfully in the implementation of REDD+ Readiness activities.

Some successful examples of Indigenous Peoples' inclusion in local climate action and decision making through the above programs are:

- In **Cameroon**, civil society organizations worked with the REDD+ and Climate Change Platform in 2013 to reach out to 30 sub-districts to enhance the full, direct, and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in REDD+.
- From 2012 to 2014, the **Nepal** Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) worked to boost the participation of indigenous and rural communities living in the Terai Hill and Mountain areas in REDD+ consultation and decision-making processes.
- In **Panama**'s Darien region, the FCPF Capacity Building Program trained a pilot group of indigenous technicians on forest monitoring methods to calculate the amount of CO2 emissions per hectare from land-use and land-use change. The results indicate that this rapid, participatory, forest inventorying method effectively captures emissions levels, while promoting the participation of Indigenous Peoples. This initiative supports ongoing efforts to improve the technical capacity of the Indigenous Peoples involved in REDD+, and can serve as a model for future forest monitoring initiatives.

3. Enhancing Knowledge Management and Dissemination of Best Practices for Indigenous Peoples' Sustainable Development

The above activities are complemented by a continued deepening of knowledge in regards to Indigenous Peoples' issues through analytical studies, research and dissemination of this information.

- The [Indigenous Peoples Development in World Bank-Financed Projects: Our People, Our Resources: Striving for a Peaceful and Plentiful Planet](#) (April 2015) report showcases eight case studies from Latin America, Asia, and Africa that produced tangible benefits to Indigenous Peoples and their communities.
- The [Indigenous Latin America in the Twenty-First Century](#) (February 2016) report expands our understanding on the situation of Indigenous Peoples in the region. Despite important socio-economic gains and increased recognition of their rights in national legislation, Indigenous Peoples are still disproportionately affected by poverty, and continue to face widespread economic and social exclusion.
- The **Afro-descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean – World Bank Flagship Report** will deepen the empirical understanding of the status of Afro-descendants to identify opportunities for targeted policies, operations, and policy engagements with client countries and Afro-descendant organizations. It will generate spaces for knowledge exchange within the Bank and with external actors, prioritizing the inclusion of Afro-descendants themselves.

- The **Good Practice Notes for the Application of Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America in Key Sectors** is first project to be conceived and executed jointly by an Indigenous People's organization, FIAY, and the World Bank. The Good Practice Notes focus on how to apply rights in the sectors of Education, Health, Natural Resource Management and Productive Development in Latin America.

4. Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples issues in World Bank Partnership Frameworks and operations

In some cases, the World Bank addresses Indigenous Peoples' issues through supporting national strategies and plans, as reflected in its Country Partnership Frameworks (CPFs). Examples include:

- In **Panama**, the Bank is preparing the first loan in more than 20 years to a country for a national Indigenous Peoples development plan. Jointly developed by Indigenous Peoples, the government and World Bank, this project will aim to strengthen governance capacity and improve access to basic services and infrastructure in accordance with the Indigenous Peoples' vision and development priorities.
- As part of its 2018 - 2022 [Country Partnership Framework with Vietnam](#), the World Bank will broaden economic participation of ethnic minorities, women, and vulnerable groups through a multi-sectoral engagement with a particular focus on livelihood- and income generating activities that benefit ethnic minorities.

5. Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Voice

To strengthen the actions above, one important initiative is:

1. The **Nordic Trust Fund grant** to operationalize a human rights based approach for Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Minority development in World Bank projects, working with an IP Rights Expert Group with members from UN OHCHR.

All activities described above are consistent with the World Bank's twin goals to eliminate extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity. Moreover, the twin goals are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. The World Bank is working with client countries to deliver on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda by supporting country-led and country-owned policies to attain the SDGs. The SDGs are relevant for Indigenous Peoples, some include specific references to Indigenous Peoples, and many goals have direct linkages to the human rights commitments outlined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.